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THE

WAY-MARK:

IN WHICH SOME OF THE

TURNS OF THE BROAD ROAD

ARE POINTED OUT.

"MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS FOR YOUR FEET."

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY JAMES B. DOW,
NO. 362 WASHINGTON STREET.
1836.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavored, in the following pages, to place a way-mark, at the entrance of some few of the many paths in that broad road, which leads to destruction. Many of these paths diverge, at first, so little from the straight and narrow way, that even the Christian except he is watchful, is liable to be deceived and led into them, before he is aware. Like Christian, in the Pilgrim's Progress, when he came to Bye-path Meadow, he sees the way runs, apparently, parallel to the true way, and he thinks that it must, of course, lead to the Celestial City; the road also, seems smoother and more pleasant, than the one in which he has been walking, and he thinks he will try it for a while; perhaps, flattering himself that he can easily step back to the narrow path, if he finds the

new way takes a different turn. Happy will he be, if he is not like Christian and Hopeful in the tale, made to lie down in the Dungeon of the Giant Despair.

And, with regard to the broad road, that is so thronged with the crowds eagerly hurrying on to destruction ; that its various turns are not always perceived ; and when they are, the poor wights, who have chosen it, are generally pushed on, by the mass in which they move, either with their own will, or against it, as the case may be. It is commonly the case that their progress is voluntary, though the individuals may be occasionally startled at a broad turn : but when the movement is not voluntary, the attempts to check their speed and break away from the crowd are so feeble, as, in general to be ineffectual, and they resign themselves to be hurried on, till a pitfall brings them up, and they are lost forever.

If, then, any thing I have written, should help to place one disciple upon his guard, and thereby save him from the discomfort, and the Christian name from the disgrace he would bring upon it, by an unsteady walk, and especially if I could raise a cry so loud, as to excite the

attention, and to arrest the steps of one sinner, so as to induce him to turn from the road to death, into the way of life, the purpose of this work will be answered, and I shall be more than repaid for my trouble. Perhaps I may not expect that ; but if this little book, should help to occupy, profitably, time which would otherwise be spent with less advantage, it will not have been written in vain.

I have only further to say, in offering these essays to the public, that they were written, originally with the intention of publishing them in a periodical. For that, they were thought too long, and are therefore presented in another form.

Chapter I.

The Progress of Evil.

"Such a stress does the established order of nature teach us to lay upon little things. And if we look into the moral world, we shall find that they are not there to be considered as of less importance."—Venn.

Some years since, in some part of New-England, exactly where or when I cannot say, there happened a very dry season, in which a certain mill-stream became so nearly exhausted, that the mill-stone could no longer be kept going. The whole neighborhood depended upon this mill for their supply of meal; and when it was stopped, the good people were at a loss where they should get their corn ground, while their teeth rebelled against eating it whole.

Hodge, too, was loth to lose his tolls; so it was determined to hold a council to consult upon the measures to be taken. When the good folks had convened, some Solomon among them proposed, that the stream should be supplied from a large pond, which lay upon a height some distance above the mill; and, accordingly, the meeting was adjourned to the

hill, where they met, armed with pickaxes and shovels.

At this time, the high lands around looked brown and parched by the drought, while a narrow strip of green meadow on the low grounds, marked the course of the rivulet, now wasted to a thread. On either side of the stream might be seen farm-houses and barns, and higher up, perched against its dam, was the mill itself, the object of all the solicitude; orchards and groves of forest trees were scattered about, and cattle here and there grazing around, completed the landscape, and gave life to the scene of rural beauty, which, spite of the parched hills around, it was when the first cut was made in the embankment of the pond.

The turf was soon displaced, and the removal of a little earth allowed the water slowly to trickle through. The breach was at first but a few inches wide; but the stream, acting upon the naked clay, soon increased the inches to feet, and the people in a short time found they had set in motion a power, to control which, all their efforts would be utterly vain. The gap grew wider and wider, and all the earth that could be thrown in to check it was swallowed up and lost in the rush of the waters; like sand thrown from the beach into the surf,

to oppose the rising tide, which could only obscure the waters for an instant, without in the least affecting their progress.

The whole body of the pond was soon in motion, and the dismayed projectors saw, in the course of a few moments, the mill and the dam swept before the inundation: then were the green meadows hid by the waters, and shortly, barns and houses, trees torn up by the roots, and cattle were swept off to one common destruction. The deluge passed; and, where had been green meadows, were heaped up barren sands; a desolate waste had taken the place of the pleasant home; and all this followed from imprudently removing scarce a shovel full of earth.

Even thus is it in the moral world. We look—and behold a scene of beauty and happiness. Again we look;—the beauty has gone, the happy home has become a moral wilderness, surrounded by a waste of woe. What has caused this? Sin has been there, and the abominations of desolation has swept all before it, changing the fruitful field to a desert, leaving for beauty, deformity, and death for life.

And did the inundation break in at once, bearing irresistibly down the barriers of virtue? There has probably never been a case

in which it has been so; but, like the first cut in the embankment of the pond, the beginnings have been small, too small, perhaps, to be thought worthy of notice. But, as when the green sward was removed, and the waters allowed to act upon the bare earth; they wore it away slowly at first; but, as they acquired motion, and the earth became soft by their action upon it, their power increased more and more, till nothing could resist their progress, which spread devastation and ruin wherever they passed; so the flood-gates of passion are not raised at once to let forth a deluge of vice upon the soul, but the first motions of appetite are generally so feeble as scarce to be thought worthy of notice. The restraints removed from conscience by the first (we are too apt to think insignificant) steps in sin, the heart is laid open to the action of vice, even as the earth was exposed to the action of the water by the removal of the green sward. The waters were slow in their progress at first, and, in like manner, is vice feeble in its beginnings, and often fails to attract attention, till it has gained too much power to be resisted; and then, when it comes in like a deluge, the happiness of parents and children, friends, and kindred, hopes for time and eternity, are swept before it. We are apt

to say of the first step, is it not a little one? but the result will show, that no sin can be little.

This is true; so true, that every body knows it, and all are willing to acknowledge it. Why, then, take so much pains to tell what can be news to no one, what none can deny? Just for the simple reason, that though all will assent to the proposition, no one, or, but very few, think fit to act upon it. All will acknowledge, that others are in this way ensnared, but will not watch for themselves; as if all men were not made of the same clay, or, as if themselves had more power to resist temptation than their fellows. 'It is because men think so, or, act as if they thought so, that we see so much vice, and so much misery in the world. Let any one look round upon his acquaintance, and see how large a proportion of those, who have made any progress in life, have fallen into some one or other of the long catalogue of vices; are suffering unhappiness from it here, and are going on recklessly, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. Perhaps he can look back to the time,—and if he cannot, still there was a time, when each one of these would have looked with abhorrence upon those very sins to which they have given themselves up, and yet, perhaps,

were taking the very steps which would lead to them.

Look at that poor drunkard, and say, did he become so at once? If he had surely known, as he ought to have known, to what it would lead him, would he not have cast away, as if it were poison, his first glass of rum? He is now bloated and loathsome; his skin is stretched to the utmost it seems able to bear, and is of a glowing fiery red. His brow is lowering, and his bloodshot eyes gleam, with a fiendish glare, a compound of idiocy and savage fury; and their expression does not belie his character, as the bruised body of his wife can testify, while his ragged, half-starved children confirm the testimony given by his own appearance, that what should be used to support their lives is taken to destroy his own. Disgusting as he now looks, I knew that man when he was as comely a youth as I have ever seen, and as promising in every respect. When he left his father's house to make his way in the world, he was a tall and handsome young man, quite intelligent, steady and industrious in his habits, and with mild and gentle manners. He probably began to drink, merely because spirit was offered him, and he saw his companions take it. I knew him a few years after, and he had got

forward in the world, had become comparatively rich; he was looking ahead with hope, was respected by those around him, and, though he was a moderate drinker, there was no appearance of change in his mind or manners. A few years more, and he was what I have described him to be. Vice had attained its maturity; poverty had come upon him like a strong man; peace had fled from his dwelling, and every day is he in danger of being hurried into the presence of God. And in what a state is he to meet his Judge! He feels and bewails his misery, but he feels, too, that his bondage is hopeless; he cannot even loosen his chains. He might cry like Sterne's poor imprisoned starling, "I cannot! Oh! I cannot get out!"

Who, that has the common feelings of humanity, but must revolt at the idea of spending all that he earns upon the selfish gratification of a depraved appetite, while his wife and his children are suffering from cold and nakedness? The poor drunkard who does it, despises himself for doing it, though it cannot make him resist the temptation. Who would be willing to make himself such an object of disgust to all who see him, as every one knows the drunkard is? Not only is he loathsome to the sight, but he offends every other sense. Who is there,

that does not wish to turn away, as the half putrid carcass passes him in the street? Who is there, that does not hate the guttural, half-beastly sound of his voice? Let those who have suffered such a penance say, if there are many things from which they would more recoil, than they would from being shut up in a stage coach with such an one! And who would take the drunkard's chance for eternity? Can such be fitted to dwell in a heaven of purity? It would no longer be pure, if they were congregated there; for we feel even here, that they contaminate the atmosphere they breathe. Can such an one be prepared to abide in the presence of the God of love—to associate with beings whose happiness it is to love one another? Look at him, beating the helpless female he has vowed to cherish, and who has trusted all her happiness to him; see him abusing his innocent children, his own flesh and blood, and say, is he not rather suited to be the companion of fiends, whose pleasure it is to hate, and whose delight is to torment one another. No one would be willing to endure the misery, or to bear the disgrace of the drunkard in this world; no one would deliberately take his chance for eternity.

And yet we see thousands with such facts be-

fore them, and, if they are asked, deprecating the result, who are yet going on, from year to year, in the same course which every drunkard has walked before them. And in doing so, are they not practically saying, that they care not though his lot should become theirs. They cannot but see, that they are walking in the way to hell; can they thus complain when its gates is closed upon them? God holds open the doors of mercy to all, but they must be finally closed to those who will walk on in the paths of sin.

But it is not to this alone, but to every form of vice that these remarks will apply. Prone as mankind are to sin, there is a monitor within which tells them it is not right; and their own instinct teaches them that it will be punished. It is not till the conscience has become seared by repeated transgressions, that it ceases to act. It is tender at first, and clamorous in its warnings; but, coming continually in contact with sin, it becomes hardened to it, until, at last, it wholly ceases to feel. Like the hands of a youth when he is first put to labor; they are then very delicate and easily blistered by his work; they are also very sensitive, but, by frequently handling his tools, they at length become so callous as scarcely to feel at all.

Few have made such progress in vice, as never to feel any twinge from conscience, when they are taking a fresh step in sin. Every such twinge is a warning from God, saying to them, that they are making progress on the broad road to destruction; and it is strange to what miserable shifts the heart is sometimes put, that it may blind conscience, and, while it hugs the sin, tries to flatter itself that it will escape the consequences. Until a man becomes so far reprobate as to be given over to hardness of heart, there is, so long as he continues in sin, a continual war going on between conscience and his evil propensities. Every victory gained by the latter renders the next victory more easy, till at last God's Spirit ceases to strive, and there is no more hope. It is this, more than any thing else—more, even, than his liability at any moment to be struck down by death, which calls to him to stop in his downward career while there is yet a chance, and it should be louder than a voice of thunder in his ears. Stop! sinner, stop! before it is too late. It may be hard to stop now, but when you have sinned a little more it will be harder yet. The voice of mercy is now calling to you. A little longer, and the doors of mercy are forever closed, and there will be

nothing before you but the blackness of darkness forever. Oh ! think for one moment, how will you be able to dwell in everlasting burning !

But, perhaps you say you cannot stop, perhaps you feel like the wretched drunkard I have mentioned, that your bondage is hopeless ; you feel wholly enslaved, and therefore will not make an effort to be free. It is hard, I know, it is very hard, to check the career of vice, to shake off the thraldom of sin, when its chains are bound about the heart. You feel that you are weak, and I well know that man's strength is weakness indeed ; but if you do feel your feebleness, you will know your need of assistance ; and if you will but go to Him who has the power to help, there is abundant reason to hope. Till you come to this, your labor is but in vain. Go then to God, go in humble, earnest prayer, and he will assist you. He is a faithful God ; do but try, and you shall see that he will come to your help. He has promised, and shall he not do it ? Take the word of one who has proved him ; nay, take his own word, and come to him.

If you take pleasure in sin, you know not how long you will be able to enjoy your pleasures, ignoble as they are ! You know not how

long you may be spared ; the sinner's death is often fearfully sudden. I was much shocked some little time since, by hearing of the end of a young man, an old acquaintance of mine, who was very unexpectedly, and without warning, cut off in the midst of his sins.

I met a friend, whom for some time I had not seen, and one of his first questions was, "Do you know that C—— is dead ?" I answered in the negative, and asked when his death occurred.

"He died last week," he said. "He was thrown from a chaise and broke his leg, and he died the next day."

"'Tis strange," I answered, "that a man should die so suddenly of a broken leg."

"It was not the fracture which killed him," my friend replied ; "but he died of delirium tremens, which the pain in his leg increased to a dreadful degree. He became a perfect maniac, and died a most horrible death, and his broken limb became most fearfully swelled before he died !"

"I did not know that C—— was intemperate," I said; "I knew he had taken to gambling, but did not know that he drank too."

"Yes he did ; the two vices commonly go together, and in him the one soon led to the other."

I knew he was rich; so I said—"I suppose he has left his family well provided for."

"No, they are paupers. He had run out all his property, and died much in debt."

I had known this young man but a few years before, when he was industrious and apparently steady as any of his acquaintance, and, as far as I know, his course of vice commenced in purchasing a single lottery ticket. And I believe that his life of sin and his wretched death, were the effect and direct consequence of this one act. But it may be, and it is not improbable, that his propensity to gambling was commenced and cherished by pin lotteries, or playing at marbles when at school. We know not how early a disposition to any vice may gain a footing in the mind, and it may very often get an established hold, before its presence is so much as suspected. But when it is discovered, we cannot be too prompt to eradicate it, any more, than we can be too careful to guard against the commencement.

When a sheet of paper has but a few words written upon it, they may easily be scratched out, but go on writing, and your labor is continually increasing, if you would wish again to make it blank. But if the stain cannot be rubbed out from the blurred and blotted paper,

science has discovered a liquid, in which it may be dipped, and thus be bleached to its original whiteness. And so has God, also, provided a fountain, in which the most polluted heart may be washed and made clean. The vilest sinner may come to this fountain; he may come now, whilst the warning voice is ringing in his ear. But, if he thinks that he will be a little more vile, before he comes, how little chance is there that he ever will!

There is a city of refuge, to which the guilty may flee. Fly, then, while the gates are open to you, lest, hereafter, when you seek to enter, you shall find them closed forever. Jesus now stands and calls, but if you resist the strivings of his Spirit, if you refuse to listen to the still, small voice of conscience, if you will not hear the preachers of the gospel calling to you, and the very words you are now reading, warning you to flee for refuge to the Savior,—can you complain if, hereafter, when you call, he should refuse to answer and, if you find yourself mocked when your fear cometh! Hear the gentle Savior, pleading with the sinner, and saying, How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing, and ye would not. Oh, provoke him not to say, you shall hear no more from him, till you hear

him as your Judge. Now, he is meek and forbearing; his voice is only heard in gentle entreaties and mild expostulation; and he stands with outstretched arms to receive you and draw you, if you will come, to his kind and tender heart, that heart which has bled for sinners, and is still bleeding, when they refuse to listen to his calls of mercy. It is bleeding for you, sinner, even now. And will you be so ungrateful as to give more pain to that suffering Savior, who has already borne so much for you and from you? Will you not listen to his voice, beseeching you to receive his proffered salvation, the salvation he has purchased for you by his own blood? Behold, he is begging, earnestly pleading with you, to accept his offered mercy, as if it was not you but himself who was to receive the benefit. And yet it is yourself who is to be made happy, and he, only by seeing you blessed.

But, if you will not hear him as a Savior, you must one day hear him as a Judge. Then his forbearance and long-suffering will have been tried to the utmost; you will then find you have exhausted his patience; the accents of his voice will be no more mild and gentle, it will no more be used in entreaties and expostulations. But his mouth will be opened in denunciations of

vengeance, and his voice, uttering the sentence of woe, will be a sound of terror in your ears, compared to which, the thunders of Sinai, would be but as the gentle murmurings of the western breeze. His arms, now held forth to draw you to his bosom, will then beckon you off to the realms of woe, into which his ready servants will quickly hurry you. There, will you have abundant leisure to bewail your folly; and, as you grind your teeth in the agony of that enduring torment, you will then wish, though wishes will then be vain, that you had not refused the offers of mercy, which are now held out to you. Perhaps you will say, you are not so very vicious, and, therefore, this will not apply to your case. But, if you have not become profligate, can you say, you have not sinned against God? can you say, you have no need of a Savior? Your own conscience will accuse you of falsehood, if you say so. You think you must become more wicked, to prepare you for his salvation! If, for a single day, he were to withdraw the influence of his Holy Spirit, and the restraints of his providence, you would, doubtless, become wicked enough. You are dependent upon him, each moment, not only for preservation in life, but for protection from moral, as well as from physical evils. You are

surrounded with snares, and you know it not The devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour., A whole host of evil spirits surround you, seeking occasion from every passion, and taking advantage of every evil propensity in your nature, of every incident in your life, to put temptations in your way; and they know well, how to press it home, in a weak moment. God and your Savior, can alone be your protection, and if you seek not his help, you know not how low you may be allowed to fall.

Chapter II.

Snares to the Unwary.

"So Hopeful, being persuaded by his fellow, went after him over the stile."—Pilgrim's Progress.

It is not only the powers of darkness, the spirits of the air, to whom our depravity gives such ready access to our hearts; it is not these alone who surround to tempt us. There are some of our own nature, who seem as eager to ensnare our souls, as can our arch-enemy him-

self—men who appear to be, and doubtless are, the agents of the evil one, and employed by him to effect our destruction. And who is to protect our unwary souls from the dangers with which we are surrounded, if we will not seek help fromhim, who alone can see the extent of our perils, who only can guard us from them?

This young man, whom I have mentioned in the former chapter, as being cut off by such a miserable death, in the very midst of a life of sin, when he first commenced his career of vice could not have made so rapid progress in wickedness, had he not been assisted in the way by some of those harpies, who, in every large community, are prowling about, that they mayprey upon incautious youth. I refer to those who have themselves been ruined by gambling, and who take delight, as well as gain their bread, by bringing others to the same ruin. Like the devils themselves, having cast away their own happiness, they make it their business to mar the happiness of all within the circle of their influence. These demons in human shape are technically called black-legs, and may be seen prowling about theatres, taverns, and the places of public resort, especially in large cities. It was by a gang of such miscreants that my

acquaintance C—— was surrounded, and taught to gamble and to drink, after he had made a commencement by purchasing his lottery ticket. There is no doubt that these harpies keep a look-out upon every lottery office, and whenever any young man is seen to purchase a ticket, he is marked by them for a prey.

I remember one of this same gang, by whose assistance C—— was ruined, and he was a complete pattern for his tribe. He was addicted to every vice, but so cautious, as never, in his indulgences, to go to such excess as to be thrown off his guard. His small, twinkling, ever-wandering gray eye shew that he was always watching for victims. He was not prepossessing, but, on the contrary, disgusting in his appearance. He was short, with broad shoulders, and a disposition to corpulency; his head was large, his face full, and his broad nose was rich with brilliant carbuncles. His thick flowing ringlets, which seemed to be objects of particular care, only made his features more hideous. Descending to the nether man, his meagre shanks appeared thrust into a pair of small clothes, with black silk stockings, after the fashion of gentlemen of the old school, whom he aped in his manners.

But, notwithstanding the repulsiveness of his exterior, he was exceedingly well qualified to entrap the unwary. He was mild, gentle and insinuating in his manners, with an apparently ingenuous frankness, well calculated to allay suspicion and gain the confidence of his intended dupes. This man probably proved the ruin of scores of unsuspecting young men; and when at the last day he appears before the judgment-seat, it is probable he will appear surrounded by the murdered souls of his victims.

What an account must such a man have to render, and yet, probably, the most aggravated charge against him will be, that he resisted the calls of the Gospel. Utterly reprobate and fiendish as he appears, that man was at one time no more wicked than you are. What he is, you would soon be, but for the restraining providence of that God, whose calls to repentance you have despised, whose offers of mercy you have rejected. If you will not now accept the call, whom will you have to blame, if you are left to accumulate even so great a measure of wrath against the day of wrath? If you will not now enlist under the banners of Jesus, you will very properly, and very probably, be allowed to serve *him* entirely, whose service you

have chosen. God asks you to give your heart to him, and if you will not, he may permit you, in his anger, to give it wholly to his and your enemy. Classed with his enemies here, you will find yourself classed with them also before the judgment-seat, and driven with them into hell. In choosing the pleasures of sin, you choose its pains and torments too. Jesus tells you his yoke is easy and his burden light; but you choose the galling yoke of sin, and galling you will find it even in this world, and you will find, further, that there is attached to it an endless chain of misery, which you must drag heavily through an hopeless eternity.

And then, when you are writhing in the flames of the burning lake, as you are dashed about by the fiery tempest, in the company of your brother fiends, who will ever be striving to add to your torments, although they can in no wise mitigate their own—whom, then, will you have to blame for your misery? It will not surely be God, who has made you the offers of mercy; it will not be Jesus, who died that you might receive them; it will not be the Holy Spirit, who has ever been striving with you; it will not be the preachers of the Gospel, who have sounded the glad tidings of salvation in your ears; nor will it be those whom

you might have heard, but would not. All these, God's goodness in providing the way of salvation, the great love of Jesus Christ in preparing it at such an expense of suffering to himself, the grace of the Holy Spirit in pressing it upon you, the faithfulness of God's servants in instructing you—all these will but aggravate your condemnation, and you will curse your own folly, that such means of grace were prepared for you in vain; you will increase your torment by imprecations upon your own heart, which could refuse such offers of salvation, which could perversely persuade you to prefer the polluting pleasures and heavy bondage of sin, to the service of God, which could make you listen to the enticements of sinners rather than to the invitation of the Gospel.

This vile wretch to whom I have referred, this land-shark, preying upon his own species, was once an innocent, smiling young babe; he was once a tottering, prattling, interesting child; he was afterwards, the blithe, frolicksome school-boy, and grew up, probably, an innocent youth: innocent, I mean, so far as regards the vices to which he has since been given over. He was once the joy of his fond parents' heart; his friends, and the community in which he lived, once looked forward to see

him an useful and respectable citizen; his very progress in iniquity, shews that he possessed a mind capable of better things. God placed his lot where he had opportunities to cultivate and improve it; his mind was improved, so as to bring forth his intellectual energies, though he so perversely abused them. Moreover, his lot was cast in a land illumined by the bright shining of Gospel light; he might know, and he did know, to distinguish good from evil; Gospel truths were pressed home upon him by the preachers of the Word, and he might read the same truths in his Bible, with which no one in our favored land need be, and with which very few are unacquainted. And, further, when he was tempted to sin, the inward monitor in his own breast told him it was wrong; when he was tampering with the temptation, he knew within himself, for his own experience had taught him, that he was pursuing the course by which he would be led to yield to it. And when he did yield, his conscience immediately accused him of his guilt, admonishing him that he was making progress in sin, and warned him of its consequences. And in all this the Holy Spirit of God was striving with him, was shewing him his sinfulness, and urging him to repentance, was pointing out his weakness,

and directing him to seek help from Him, who alone was able to support him. The threats of the Gospel were presented to him as a warning on the one hand, and the promises of the same Gospel held forth for encouragement, upon the other. If he did not listen, it was because he would not; it was because he preferred the calls of his wicked companions, and because his depraved heart loved the ways of sin; and, therefore, did he obstinately shut his eyes to the destruction upon which he was rushing; therefore, were his ears closed to the allurements to bliss, presented in God's word; for to come in with them, he must seek that purity which he did not love: his heart must be changed to that holiness which he hated. It followed, that he was given over to commit all uncleanliness with greediness, till his heart became so hardened in iniquity, that he probably could not repent: it is most likely, (though of no human being would I say that it was so,) that God's Spirit had long since ceased to strive with him, and that he was allowed to go down into the perdition for which he was so ripe.

And yet, the grace of God may save even such a man, as it were, by a miracle of mercy; but, as far as we can see, how small, how very small a chance has such an one of being saved!

He has placed himself out of the way of the means of grace, and has done all he could to get beyond the reach of God's mercy. He associates but with the filth and offscouring of the earth; and if he seeks the company of a less hardened sinner, it is but to prey upon his wealth, and when he has fleeced his victim, as if he had not injured him enough, he will strive to initiate him into the mysteries of iniquity, and, if possible, to make him ten times more the son of damnation than himself. Such a man attends not the preaching of God's word: but, if any one will teach lies, will help to blind his eyes to the consequences of his sins, will tell him there is no hell, that God is a merciful God, and will not punish his creatures; or, if he will try to persuade him that he has no soul, that when he dies he will perish even as a beast perishes, him will he hear. To him will he listen, because, having resolved to go on in the ways of sin, he is glad to hear that sin will not be punished; having determined to take this world for his portion, he is pleased to be told, and he will strive to believe, that here is to be passed the whole of his existence. Why should he not wish himself a beast, and rejoice to be classed with them? He can have no relish for the joys of heaven, and no one would wil-

lingly endure the pains of hell. One or the other state he knows must be his, if there is another world; and, therefore, he feels it his interest to be an infidel. The word of God is, of course, not used in the society which he frequents, and, if it is mentioned, it is only in mockery. The name of the Almighty is much in their mouths; but, it is only used in forming imprecations, often, perhaps, in precise terms, inviting him to execute vengeance upon themselves. And, is it strange, that vengeance should at last come? Must not every one see that the prospect of a person so hardened in sin, and so separated from the means of grace, is almost hopeless? Reader, should you be willing to take the chance of such a man for eternity?

And yet, if you are an unrepentant sinner, (and I am supposing, that I am addressing such an one,) how is your chance, as compared with his? Wherever you are in your course, you are going over the ground which he has once passed. You may not have given yourself up to vice; and there was a time, when he had not. You may feel, that the doors of mercy are yet open to you; so they are, but were they not once spread wide to him, and have they not once been open, to every wretched soul that

is now writhing in the torments of hell? He had the means of mental improvement, and he perverted them; he had opportunities of religious instruction, and he neglected them: can you deny, that you have enjoyed the same privileges, and, so long as you are unrepentant, are you not using them, in the same manner? He heard the calls of mercy, and it will, most fearfully, augment his condemnation, that he refused to listen; and will you heap up, for yourself, the same increase of wrath? Will you not attend, while the warning voice is yet sounding in your ears? Oh, that it might be a voice of thunder, to rouse you from your slumber! Has not your conscience continually convinced you of sin, warning you against temptation, and accusing you of guilt; and has not God's Holy Spirit, by that, as well as by the preaching of the Gospel, been striving with you; and have not you been grieving the Holy Spirit, by resisting its influence, that you may go on in sin? If you have not said, by your words, that you will not repent, have you not, day by day, been practically saying so by your deeds? Are you not always saying it, when you keep in the way of those who you know will tempt you to sin?

In all this, you are pursuing the same course

as the wretch of whom I have been speaking, and if you will not now hear the call to repentance, if you will still go on to strive with the Spirit, why may not God give you up to sink into the same depths of degradation, into which this poor reprobate was allowed to fall? How do you know, that you will not hereafter become so wicked, as to take delight in ensnaring your innocent friends, so wicked, as to be held up as a monster in vice, for the warning of others? You may feel, perhaps, that it is impossible you can ever become so bad; but why is it impossible? You cannot guard yourself from the snares with which you are surrounded; you cannot even see them, half. You cannot order the incidents of your life, so that you shall not be tempted above your strength. There is no one can protect you but the Almighty, and why should he? He has promised to give strength to those who ask him; but you will not ask him. There is no reason, then, why he should succor you, and if he will not, there is no extent of depravity to which you may not be led. There is scarce a profligate, be he never so vile, who would not at one time have thought as you do now, that it was altogether impossible, that he should go to the excess of vice, into which the force of temptation, and

the depravity of his own wicked heart, have at last seduced him. He did not deliberately, and at once, plunge into pollution. How, then, did he arrive at his present degradation? By the same paths, sinner, in which you are now walking. He resisted the voice of conscience; he tampered with temptation; when it looked alluring, he did not fall in with it at once; but, he allowed himself to think of it, and to remain in the way of it, till at last, it proved too strong for him. His conscience accused him of guilt, just as yours does now, when you know that you have sinned; but it did not make him watchful to avoid temptation, neither did his weakness in falling, cause him to seek help from above. The next time, his conscience made a less vigorous resistance than it did before, and accused him less bitterly after his transgression, and in both he was pleased to find that it troubled him less. He was thus encouraged to go on, conscience, each time, becoming more and more blunted, till, at last, he could commit the sin, as a matter of course, and almost without thinking that it was a sin. His progress so far established, and the accusations of his conscience comfortably silenced there, the tempter sees he is fitted to take another step, and at a time, favorable for his purpose,

presents the bait. His heart tries to persuade his conscience, that it is but a small sin, and so it seemed, from the position he now occupied, though had it been presented, before he had gone so far, it would have appeared to be a very great sin. Conscience, accustomed to defeat, must again submit; and thus, he took one small step after another small step, till he had gone so far down the steep descent to the pit, that a miracle only could check his progress.

And this is the case, in a degree, with all unrepentant sinners. They occupy, very much at their ease, a position, which, at one period of their lives, would have filled them with consternation; and this position they have gained, by small encroachments upon conscience, which has receded step by step before them, battling for every inch of the ground. And when they have gained the station, and conscience no longer annoys them in it, they then look upon it as their place, and are easily urged forward to new victories over their oft defeated antagonist.

Now, Reader, is it not so with you? Will you not allow me to persuade you, carefully, and honestly, to examine into your present state? Do you not now habitually tolerate in your-

self some indulgence which, at some former period of your life, you would have thought very wrong? If it has ever been wrong, it cannot be right now. The change is not in the nature of the thing; it is only that conscience has been silenced, by finding its rebukes unattended to. No matter whether it is a sin of the flesh, or a sin of the spirit, it is still a sin against God; and can you say that there is none such, which you have allowed to grow upon you? If there is, what is there to prevent its further growth? If you will not repent and turn to God, there is nothing to prevent your going on, till you become a very monster in iniquity. You cannot but see, if you will honestly examine the case, that you are going on in the same road which others have gone in, till they have exhibited the very extremes of depravity. You cannot but perceive that you have progressed hitherto almost unconsciously; and not only so, but your progress has been more and more rapid; and what is to hinder your continuing in the same course, until you are as bad as the very worst of your acquaintance, or, as the very worst of your species? Unless you seek the grace of God, to prevent you, what else can do it? It will not be your detestation of wickedness, for you may per-

ceive you have already done what you once abhorred. It will not be, because you have hitherto been free from any particular sin; for every one else has been so, however at last he may have given himself up to it. Look at the profane swearer, bidding defiance openly to his Maker; look at the blustering bully, or the blood-thirsty tyrant; look at the beastly sot, or the still grosser glutton; look at any one who has given himself up to sin, in any of its many shapes of disgusting deformity,—and you may say of that individual, that he was once as innocent as human nature could be. Human nature in you, is the same as human nature in him; the same causes which have led him to transgress so deeply, may act upon you. You owe your preservation, hitherto, so far as you have been preserved from vice, to the circumstances in which a merciful God has placed you, rather than to any effort of your own. Be thankful for this difference in your situation, but trust not in it for preservation. Take not advantage of God's goodness, to remain unrepentant, for he who placed you in your present circumstances, can easily change them. He can, without your knowing it, allow you to fall into others, where, the weakness of your nature

will be laid open, unguarded to every attack. He may allow such temptations to assail you, as you will be wholly unable to resist. And are you not provoking him to do so, when you refuse to acknowledge the goodness which has hitherto prevented you, and when you will not repent of these sins, which you have committed against his goodness? If you will still go on, regardless of him, you must know, that his forbearance will not be always continued, and that this call, which you now refuse, will but increase his anger against you.

But if the threatened indignation of the Almighty cannot move you; if you do not fear being given over to depravity, in this world; if you can harden yourself against the expectation of the wrath to come,—yet, cannot you feel any gratitude for the mercy which has hitherto preserved you, for the bounty which has poured upon you so many blessings, for the patience which has so long borne with your neglect and provocations? If you are lost to gratitude, then is your nature depraved, and your heart is hard, indeed. But I trust that it is not so; that you will yet listen; that you will now accept the offers of pardon. God is yet ready to extend his mercy to you. esus

with outstretched arms, is ready to receive you, and invites, begs, entreats you, to come to him. Listen, then, to the call of your long-suffering Savior.

'Sinner, come; why will you die,
God your Savior, asks you, why.'

Chapter III.

On the Guilt of Profane Oaths.

'For because of swearing the land mourneth—wherefore, their way shall be to them, as the slippery ways in the darkness; they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitations, saith the Lord.'

Of all the forms of wickedness, practised in an ungodly world, none seems more strongly to point out the haters of God, than the habit of profane swearing. No passion tempts to it, no gratification flows from it; it appears a mere gratuitous defiance of our Maker, and may be regarded as an act of direct worship to the devil. It is such a disgusting, as well as useless breaking forth of the spirit of evil, that it would seem nothing could prompt to it, but an innate love of wickedness, and, accord-

ingly, we think, and are seldom deceived in thinking, that the man who habitually practises this, is capable of almost any other act of sin. Those who are experienced in other forms of evil, very naturally, and almost mechanically, fall into this also, which so strongly marks them out as the enemies of God; and, when this is made the beginning, it very readily, and invariably, leads to other varieties of sin. By swearing, a man makes a public call, to every one who hears him, to see how much he hates, and how little he fears God. He is giving a warning to all, that they may not trust him, or believe him capable of any thing good.

Every one who loves God, must view with horror the man who publicly defies and dishonors him; and he who loves his fellow-creatures and feels pity for a fallen world, must see with sorrow a human being making an open profession of wickedness, and daring, and in expressed terms, asking his Maker to pour out upon him the fury of his anger. But it is not to the Christian, alone, that the practice exhibits features of disgust; but to every one, though free from religious sentiments, does it produce a revolting of the feelings, until habit has deadened the sensibility, and then, perhaps, the individual is induced to enlist,

openly, under the banners of Satan, by falling into the practice himself. To none of the varied forms of sin, are the lines of the poet more applicable, than to this, where he says,—

> "Vice is a monster, of so vile a mien,
> That to be hated, needs but to be seen,
> But often seen, familiar with its face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

A youth, who resided in a distant country town, as he approached the time for entering the active scenes of life, set out for a seaport, there to enter into business. In the place where he had lived, a man would have been looked upon, almost as a maniac, who had taken his Maker's name in vain, or who had used any of the expletive expressions, so common among these who are in the habit of profane swearing. It was a moral and religious community, and, consequently, the swearer was there viewed in the same light as every one, who habitually and systematically bids defiance to God, by breaking his expressed commands, must be viewed, by those who would honor their Creator. So strong was the public sentiment in this place, and so powerful are the opinions of a community, when resolutely declared, that those who gave into habits of profanity, elsewhere, were effectually prevented from yielding to them there.

When, therefore, this young man entered the stage, to proceed on his journey, his ears were entirely unaccustomed to such sounds: he had received good religious instruction, had seen before him examples of piety, and had formed correct views of the spirituality of true religion; but his advantages had not so operated, as to renew his heart. Nevertheless, as he knew what was right, and had been accustomed to a correct moral deportment in those around him, when he left his retirement, and coming more into the world, found himself in the midst of the open actings and expressions of wickedness, his heart seemed to shrink within him from the polluting contact. At the first stopping of the stage, to exchange horses, he went with youthful curiosity to the stables, to see them shifted: the ostlers he found swearing at the poor animals, like so many fiends, while they pulled and kicked the docile creatures about, as if they had been totally devoid of feeling, and had been formed by the common Creator, not to be the useful servants of man, but as convenient subjects, on which to vent the exuberance of his evil passions. The young man, disgusted with the scene, returned to the house: he went into the bar-room, and there found men drinking, and, no less than in the stable,

venting their curses, though without any apparent object, to draw them forth. With increased disgust, and almost sick with the revulsion of his feelings, he sought refuge in the coach, where the presence of the female passengers acted as a restraint upon the others; for men who have so established a habit, that they say they cannot avoid swearing, find they can avoid it, in the presence of a respectable female, although, in the presence of God they feel no restraint.

Some days were occupied in performing his journey, and before he reached his destination, the young man had become so accustomed to oaths, that he could bear to hear them repeated, though he felt no inclination to laugh at the jokes, with which they were accompanied. Arrived, he found himself in contact with the profane, at every turn; scarce any of the business of life was conducted, without the assistance of oaths. The mason laid his bricks with them; the carpenter used them, as he sharpened his planes; the truckman drove his horses with imprecations; the laborer, hoisting out a cargo, swore at his blocks and tackles; and the stripling clerk, who was taking the account, must show his manhood, by swearing out his orders, or expressing his dissatisfaction with oaths;

the sailor cursed himself, in the joy of his heart, when he found himself on shore, and the criminal did the same, in the bitterness of his spirit, as he was marched off to prison. One universal language was employed, in the expression of pleasure and pain, dissatisfaction and content: it was the same with the busy and the idle; the rich and the poor used it alike. The oaths of some might be more refined, and those of others more coarse, but they were universally prevalent, as if the world could not be carried on, without cursing all that was in it. Is this an exaggerated statement? There is no one, I think, who is acquainted with the business parts of any of our great cities, but will allow that it is true; not without some individual exceptions, but true of the mass he meets with there. Surely, then, the land should mourn, because of swearing; every parent should mourn, who has a son exposed to such influences; every Christian wife, who has an unconverted husband among them; and even a Christian is in danger, from constant habit, of learning to hear these expletives, as a matter of course.

It is no wonder that a youth, in the daily habit of meeting with so much profaneness, should at last become addicted to it himself,

especially, as a boy who was afraid to swear, was looked upon as a green country lad, a sort of Johnnie Raw, who would require a great deal of polishing, to make proper society for the cits.

Our youngster did not like to pass for such an one, but oaths were still disgusting to him, though he had become accustomed to them in others. One sin, however, makes way for another; falling into a passion one day, he almost unconsciously let it break forth by swearing. Having made a beginning, the evil rapidly increased upon him, and, being of a lively turn, and of a reckless disposition, he soon took the lead of all his companions in this, and, as would naturally follow, in other sorts of wickedness. One of his comrades gave him the singular praise, one day, of swearing with a good grace, observing, that he did not like to hear a man swear, as if he was half afraid; that he had better not swear at all, than to look as if he was frightened to death while doing it. Finding it was such an accomplishment, and one in which he could exhibit himself with so good an air, it is no wonder that the evil increased upon him, until scarce a sentence was uttered, which was not interlarded with an oath, and no other name was so frequently in his

mouth as the name of his Maker. To have listened to his conversation, any one would have thought him utterly reprobate. He appeared, however, much worse than he was; but it is not strange, that the religious opinions, instilled by early instruction, should become distasteful to him, and, consequently, though he still thought it right to attend upon the forms of public worship, he preferred hearing those preachers, who labored to prove that he was in a fair way for heaven. He liked to be told that his heart was good, and that God, while that was the case, would not be strict in judging the little peccadillos of the outward conduct, because he was a kind father, who knew our infirmities, and pitied the frailty of his children; he was a merciful God, who delighted not in the death of a sinner. He not only persuaded himself to believe so, which was a very easy matter, having his inclination to back him, but he was also forward in leading others to the same belief. He was a great deal assisted, in forming his new opinions, by a man who was called a clergyman: this man labored hard to persuade him, that he was in no danger, and had no occasion to fear death. According to his ideas, the dread which some people had, of the king of terrors, was but the

effect of the timidity of old age, or feebleness; and he said, he had seldom seen a young man who was afraid to die. He mentioned an instance.

A young man, an intimate acquaintance of his, he said, had been sick, and he had visited him several times. One day as he was crossing the court-yard of the young man's house, he saw him sitting at an open window, and beckoning for him to come in. He was surprised to find his friend sitting at his ease, for his disorder had before been exceedingly painful. When he expressed his congratulations at the apparent recovery, the young man replied, that it was indeed pleasant to be relieved from the horrid pain, with which he had been tormented, but that if his friend knew the cause, perhaps he would not be so forward to congratulate him. His relief arose from the fact, that mortification had taken place, which, in less than an hour, would put an end to his existence. When asked how he felt, in regard to the near approach of death, he said, he had never felt better in his life, and he could not realize that death was so near; but he knew the fact, and had called in his friend, to take one glass of wine with him, before he left this world. There was a decanter of wine, and

glasses before him, and each helped himself to a glass. Having drank his wine, this wolf in sheep's clothing said to his dying friend, that he was glad to see him so cheerful, in the prospect of death; that he had led an innocent life, and there was no reason why he should be afraid to die. Having made this, and other like observations, with which false shepherds are accustomed to quiet souls, on the brink of perdition, he left the young man, who, in a few minutes more, had ceased to breathe.

Such a story reminds one of the disgusting levity exhibited in the French revolution, and which was one of the most horrible features of it. The victims pledged one another, in their wine, before they left their prison, and then went off joking and laughing to the guillotine, as it were, dancing into the grave. But repulsive, as the incidents above related must be, to a serious mind, they answered the purpose for which they were intended, by lulling the youth, to whom they were told, into deeper security, with regard to the future. He had become an unbeliever, almost a disbeliever, when God in mercy brought him into affliction, which was continued till he was led to see the error of his ways. Not for himself was the mercy shown him, but in answer to the prayers of his

distant friends, who were wrestling for him with that God, whose name he was daily insulting.

But no one, who has not in like manner been tempted, can tell the trouble his evil habits cost him, before they could be broken up; how often he was betrayed by them into sin, and led to bitter repentance. The angry passions, and the disposition to profanity, seem to be kindred forms of evil, like cannibals feeding upon each other, and alike gaining strength, by the support thus naturally afforded. Swearing provides a ready way for the exhibition of anger, which it has a tendency to excite and increase. In this young man, the two dispositions had grown together, and it was long after he saw and mourned over their wickedness, before the one could be controlled and prevented from breaking into the other. When evil passions have been allowed thus to get a footing and become matured, it is only by seeking help from above, that we can ever hope to eradicate them; and then only by a severe and painful conflict, after reaching, perhaps, the brink of despair. How cautious, then, should we be of allowing habits to make a beginning which are so rapid in their growth, and so difficult to control, that nothing but the power of God can master them.

Happy for those, who have a kind friend wrestling with God, in their behalf, while they are striving themselves to make their own destruction sure. It is not every one who is thus blessed. I mentioned a companion of this young man, who admired a graceful swearer. He had never been in the way of good religious instruction, and could have had but a very imperfect idea of the Gospel truths. He went to the West Indies, took a fever and died, when he had hardly attained to manhood. He died far from every means of grace, and it is not known that he so much as thought of the eternity into which he was stepping. What a fearful eternity lies before those, who have taken delight in heaping insult on their Maker's name! How can they meet that Judge, whom they have so often invited to curse them? Hell and damnation have been familiar terms in their mouths; how will they sound in their ears, on that dreadful day, as they stand to be judged before the throne of God? And how must those rejoice, who were once profane, but who, while there was yet time, sought cleansing in that fountain, which is open to all uncleanness? If any thing on that day can give them pain, it must be the remembrance of this sin. How must they admire the goodness of that God,

who provided a way of salvation to those who have openly defied him! how must they love that Savior, who was willing to suffer death, for such as have taken pleasure in casting reproach upon him! When the angels of God hear the voice, which has been accustomed to utter curses, attuned to praise, or poured forth in humble prayer, will not their own songs of triumph burst out with increased power, at so great a display of redeeming love?

There is no one, who will not be made accountable for every vice, into which he may fall, and for each particular sin into which it may lead him; but, while the guilt of the individual is not diminished, others may have his blood to answer for, if they have placed temptation in his way, or have sent him into the way of temptation. Especially, do parents bring guilt on their own souls, when they subject their offspring to evil influences, for the purpose of facilitating their acquisition of wealth, or other means of worldly aggrandizement. Not that it is in their power to keep their children out of the way of temptation—for to do that, they must be removed from the world; but there are some situations of peculiar danger, into which it not unfrequently happens that parents are willing their children should go,

because that in them they will find superior advantages for making money; as if a little gold and silver could be any compensation to them for the loss of their souls. It cannot be from ignorance that it is done; for no principle is better established, or more generally allowed, than that the company of the vicious has a tendency to break down the barriers of virtue. Those parents, who, for the sake of gain, would expose their children to such evil influences, would do well to remember, that there is a day approaching, when they will wish that the silver and gold had been poured molten down their own throats, before they had betrayed the souls of their offspring to obtain it. Even if God, in his infinite mercy, should grant repentance, and snatch them and their children from eternal ruin, they will yet find that, even in this world, the consequence will be unhappiness; they will find, that they have planted a thorn in their side, which will rankle and fester, producing such lasting discomfort, as will be only removed, when the grave shall close upon them. Even a temporary exposure, if it is long enough to remove the disgust, produced by any sin, may be followed by consequences which life alone may terminate, and by others which shall last as long as eternity

shall last. And when the sin is repented of, it must cause a severe and painful struggle to resist it, and very often is the cure accompanied with many relapses, leading the poor sinner almost to despair before he attains the victory.

If those parents and friends are subject to reproof, who allow the youth who are under their protection to go into the way of the profane, what must be said of those, who, in their own person, set them an example of profaneness? I once knew a military officer, of high standing, who was very much given to the use of impious expressions. He was one day riding with a near relation of his, a youth in his teens; the lad was driving, and, in passing through a crowded street, found his way obstructed by a loaded team. Thinking the drayman did not make sufficient effort to clear a passage for him, he became impatient, and, feeling full confidence in the great brown fist of his companion, he began to rate the man most soundly, letting fly at the same time a full volley of his manly oaths. "That's right, my boy," said his friend, slapping him over the shoulder, "I did not know before that you had so much spirit!" The boy grew to be a man; the officer trusted a large amount of property in his hands, and lost it. Who will say that he did not deserve to lose

it? It was a very just recompense for the lesson he had taught: but then, I would not be understood to intimate that so trifling a thing as the loss of property, can constitute the punishment due to so great a sin as it is to encourage a youth in vainly taking his Maker's name. No; fearful must be the recompense that awaits such guilt. I would not judge any individual, for God's mercy is open to every sinner upon repentance; but this sin, unless repented of, must lead to a dreadful doom: it will lead to misery as lasting as eternity—an eternity to be passed in the gloomy regions of despair, where the mouth which has here been employed to utter curses, will find abundant work in grinding its own teeth for the agony, which the poor wretch will find it is equally impossible to mitigate and out of his power to endure. Does not our reason tell us, that he who injures the soul, commits a greater sin than he who hurts the body? As much greater is the one than the other, as eternity is longer than time; as much greater as the happiness and miseries of heaven and of hell are more intense than our earthly joys and pains; and not only so, but the amount of the two differences multiplied together, an infinite sum by an infinite sum, would be required to express the difference of guilt contracted in

committing an injury against the body, and that contracted in doing an injury to the soul. The smallest particle of moisture that floats in the atmosphere, too minute to be detected by our senses, bears a greater proportion to the waters of the mighty ocean which encompasses the globe, than do the things of time to the things of eternity. The impalpable particle of dust, blown up from the summer's road, bears some proportion to the vast solar system, and to the universe of systems which surround it; but not even such a proportion do the pleasures of this life bear to the enjoyments of the world to come; not even so great are the pains we endure here, as compared to the former which must be suffered, but cannot be endured, by the impenitent hereafter. Now, every one acknowledges the justice of punishing the murderer, him who kills the body; every one sees, that he is not only liable to the penalty inflicted by human laws, but that he is very properly subject to God's wrath. Then, if the soul is of so much more value than the body, does not he deserve a sorer punishment who kills a soul, than does the man who only deprives his fellow-creature of the breath, which in a few years he must part with, in the course of nature? And does not he murder a soul, who leads an indi-

vidual to commit a sin, for which that individual will be condemned at the day of judgment? When any one administers a poison which causes death, he is guilty of murder. Now sin is the poison of the soul, and whoso leads a soul to sin, he administers the poison. This every man does, who utters an oath in the hearing of another: his guilt does not consist merely in committing the sin himself, but also in enticing others to sin. And surely swearing is not the least of sins, which is, as it were, the standard-bearer to the whole army, showing forth their colors to the world; which, when it marches in the van, makes way for an host of vices which are sure to follow; and, when it brings up the rear, most effectually closes the ranks against the approach of any better influences which, but for this guard, might sometimes break in and disperse the troop.

'What a fuss you are making,' says the profane man, 'about a few expressions by which no one means any harm! We swearers feel no ill-will to those about us.' But you do the harm, my friend, nevertheless, though you may say, you are in sport. I do not know that it is less sinful to do an injury without an object, than it is to do one to secure an equivalent, or what may be thought by the perpetrator to be an

equivalent. It appears to me, that the sin is greater, and that the guilt contracted is in the inverse ratio to the object to be gained; and I think I should carry with me the voice of mankind in every instance where their temporal welfare was alone concerned. We can suppose a case, and similar ones might be brought from real life. One man murders another, to obtain some object, perhaps to provide his family with food by the plunder he gets; or even, let us suppose, for the love of money, or to gratify feelings of revenge. Another man, without any particular end in view, by which he hopes to benefit himself, mixes arsenic in a barrel of flour, or poisons a fountain of water, and, in this way, kills an individual who had not injured him, who would not enrich him by his death, and whom perhaps he had never seen. Which of the two, would be most execrated by society? Would not the act of the last appear almost too fiendish to be perpetrated by a human being? And why, then, should not he who scatters the moral poisons, be as strongly condemned? He will not be so perhaps by men, who care not for the honor of God, and who regard the soul as of less value than their fleeting breath; nay, make it of less account than the mere trappings and ornaments of the body. But how will he ap-

pear when judged by God, whose ways are so different from the ways of the world, whose thoughts are so much above our thoughts? Will the guilty wretch then plead ignorance? He knew profanity was sin, as much as any one can know that arsenic is poison; every one knows that sin is contagious, as well as he knows that poison is destructive. Will the swearer, then, say to his offended God, that he meant no harm; that he only swore from the exuberance of his spirits; that his execrations were but a sort of safety valve, to let off their redundancy; and, though he will then see the soul of his victim writhing in the burning lake before him, will he tell his Judge that he meant the individual no harm, and that it was in very thoughtlessness he laid before that soul the stumbling-block over which he pitched headlong into the dreadful abyss? We know well, what effect it would have upon their verdict, were a criminal to plead that he had committed a murder but in sport. Every one must see, that a crime committed without a temptation is but the more aggravated for that very circumstance. And will the eternal Creator be blinded by an excuse which cannot deceive the simplest of his erring creatures? and will he judge less correctly than they do?

Every one has heard of the Buccaneers, who, for many years, infested the West Indies and the coast of South America, making their name a terror to all who navigated the adjacent sea. These pirates not only robbed the ships they fell in with upon the ocean, murdering the crews, but very often made excursions on the shore, plundering churches as well as houses, sometimes burning the cities and towns upon the coasts, and destroying the inhabitants. Among this robbing and murdering crew, there was one man more celebrated than the rest, and whose memory is connected to this day with the idea of the most savage cruelty, while the recollection of the partners of his crimes has long since been lost in oblivion. This man was for many years a leader among them, and has been known ever since by the name of Black Beard. He possessed the most desperate courgae, and a degree of strength which perhaps was never surpassed by that of any individual in any age: it is said he could break a dollar in two between his fingers. These qualities no doubt gained him his rank among the pirates; but it is not these which have caused him to be spoken of, while his companions have been forgotten; but it was his ultra-piratical cruelty, his delight in inflicting useless pain,

which has made his name to be remembered only to be execrated, as the designation of a monster of barbarity.

The whole band of Buccaneers were reckless of their own lives, and ready, at all times, to inflict death or suffering upon others, when it was necessary in securing their booty. When they made an incursion upon the land, they minded not to set fire to the churches where the terrified inhabitants had sought refuge from the attack; when a prize was taken at sea, it was their practice to make the crew walk the plank, as it is called—a method of forcing an individual to murder himself, an invention probably of the Buccaneers, and well worthy of them, and which has been a custom among pirates ever since; and the phrase has become a cant term among them, to express their intention to murder. The way in which this was done, was by laying a plank so that one end projected over the ship's side. The victim was then made to stand upon the plank, and, having a cannon-ball tied to each foot, he was obliged to walk out upon it until he was so far beyond the ship, that his weight on the outside would lift up the other end, and cause him to slip into the water; there, he would continue to sink from the weight of the cannon-balls, and would, per-

haps, be buried some hundreds of feet under water before his heart had ceased to beat, and while his blood was yet warm in his veins. Now, what a monster must that man have been, who, among thousands of miscreants daily perpetrating such acts, could attain to so great an eminence in wickedness, as to be remembered for a century after the others had been forgotten. It might be said, in general, they had some object to effect in the commission of crime, and if they went further than was necessary to accomplish their present purpose, it was done under the excitement of the moment; and besides, it was, no doubt, a part of their policy to acquire a name for ferocity, which has always been found an important auxiliary in effecting a conquest. Or, if they murdered their prisoners in cold blood, it might still be said that they were their enemies, whom they made to walk the plank; because, if they allowed them to escape, their own safety would be endangered. Bad enough motives they were, and no extenuation, much less an excuse, for the crime of murder; and I only mention them to show, that, villains as they were, they had attained to a less excess of wickedness, than had their leader, whose innate love of cruelty led him to inflict gratuitous suffering, by maiming and taking

the lives, not only of his enemies, but of his friends also. I was acquainted with a gentleman, who had lived in the West Indies for a number of years, where he had picked up some anecdotes concerning this pirate, one of which I will relate, to show that he richly merited the odious fame which is attached to his name.

The Buccaneers were as remarkable for their hilarity among themselves, as for cruelty towards their enemies. In their convivial meetings no one was of a merrier mood, or more boisterous in his mirth, than was Black Beard, their leader; but, in the middle of his merriment, amidst roars of laughter would he shut his eyes, and, drawing his pistols from his girdle, he would discharge them at random under the table, and he was never more delighted than when he had killed or wounded one of his comrades by this practical joke.

I have compared the careless swearer to the man who carelessly distributes poison; but there are worse characters than he is, though he may have led his youthful followers into the way of everlasting death. I refer to such, and, to the disgrace of human nature, there are such, as take delight in teaching children, perhaps their own offspring, to learn to swear profanely, and seem as if they would burst

with merriment, when they have persuaded the little ones to lisp an execration. These may be likened to Black Beard, in the anecdote I have related above; for, like him, it would appear as if they could be actuated only by an abstracted love of sin. They do an act, for the doing of which, they can expect no recompense, unless they feel recompensed by the pleasure of committing wickedness, a motive which we suppose to be the one that actuates the devil, and it is one well worthy of him. Were we allowed to traverse the eternal world, in what part would we most naturally seek for such a monster as Black Beard? Would it not be in the very lowest regions of the bottomless pit, where the flames are the most intense, and where the never-dying worm is most vigorous in its gnawing? And there, side by side with the pirate, in the midst of the same flames, sharing the bitter gnawings of the same deathless worm, might we expect to find the man who has made himself merry in wounding the souls of his young fellow immortals, even as the Buccaneer did, in maiming the bodies of his companions. Perhaps the desperate wickedness of Black Beard himself had its first beginnings in an early lesson of vice, which some monster, more wicked than himself, took

the pains to instil into his youthful mind. And perhaps, too, on that last great day, when all the generations who have lived on the earth, shall assemble together to be judged for the deeds done in the body—perhaps, I say, we shall then find, that many who, in their time, have passed for very good sort of people, when the difference of their advantages is calculated and placed in the account, as it most assuredly will be, will be thought to deserve a severer doom than the great West Indian pirate himself. With such, will most likely be found those who profane in a Christian land, however they may have gained the esteem of mankind; and, almost certainly, among them will be seen all those who have taken the pains to initiate youth into the mysteries of the vice.

Most persons have had abundant opportunities to observe the vice of profane swearing at its commencement, and in its progress, but few have viewed its end, the closing scene; that is, the last act in this world, before death shuts from our sight the scenes which are to follow, and which none of us shall live to see accomplished, though we must all live forever. But though we cannot have them manifest to our senses, we may know what they are; for the holy scriptures have provided us with figures,

whereby we may form a conception of them, or, at least, may do it so far as our finite capacity can take in any thing that is infinite in duration and intensity. One of the young men I have referred to in this chapter, had once an opportunity to see a confirmed swearer on the verge of eternity, and he was recklessly profane to the end, till his profaneness appeared to choke him, and his last breath went forth with an oath.

It was in Calcutta, where the young man was in the hospital for seamen. One day, when he found most of the wards deserted, but hearing a loud noise in an inner ward, he followed the sound, and saw all the inmates of the hospital, collected in silence and apparent seriousness, around a bed, from which the noise proceeded, and on which was laid a man in the last agonies of death. Hard did the poor fellow struggle with his last enemy, throwing his limbs about, as if in a vain attempt to grapple with him. His foe eluded his grasp, but did not the less maintain his own hold. Had his antagonist been a mortal, few men were better fitted to have coped with him: but what is mortal strength in a struggle with the king of terrors! The sick man was a Swede; and as he tossed about his large limbs, he made a dis-

play of massy bone, of well defined, and, spite of wasting disease, of prominent muscle, which, with his expanded chest, his manly features, blue eyes and light flaxen hair, marked him out as the true descendant of those ancient sea kings, who were once as, but for the softening influences of Christianity, their offspring would now be, a scourge to all the coasts of Europe. They loved to make their home upon the waters; and there, too, his home had been for the greater part of his brief existence upon the earth; for he had scarce attained the age of thirty years. Their voice might have been heard above the raging of the waters; and the roar of the tempest, and the voice of the Typhoon itself, and the thunders of battle, could not drown the sound of his. And now, as he tossed upon his death-bed, the power of his lungs did not appear in aught diminished, or, rather, I should say, the anguish of disease gave an unnatural stimulus to his voice. And what were his words? They were indiscriminately in Dutch and English, and were uttered with an energy that struck awe into all around him, and almost caused the hardy seamen to tremble: but the sentences he uttered, whether in English or Dutch, were execrations upon every person, and every thing around

him; curses loudly called for upon his own body, and each particular member of it, and upon his own soul; curses vented upon his father, and his mother, upon his friends, and his enemies, upon every one, whom his memory or his senses brought across his mind; and he went on, till his words appeared to strangle him, and he was dead.

It is horrible to think of a man dying with blasphemies upon his last breath; but as it is true, why should it not be told, since such might be the end of every profane man, but for the goodness of God, most surely undeserved, by such as pollute his holy name, but which, alone, saves them from such a death! And the lad who timidly utters his first oath, is making a beginning, which may lead to the same end.

Chapter IV.

On yielding to Angry Passions.

"It is the part of folly, to wait till evils have attained their maturity, before they are attacked; for then, that which at first might have been easily crushed, becomes irresistible."—Venn.

"How great a matter a little fire kindleth."

The propriety of this illustration was very forcibly brought to my mind, some time since, by what fell under my own observation, and the circumstances which I afterwards heard connected with it. It was late one night, when, as I was returning to my home, I observed a bright spot in the distant horizon. Could it be a meteor, or, was it the rising moon? For a meteor, it was too fixed, and a moment's reflection shew me that it was in the wrong quarter of the heavens for the moon. In another moment, a long forked flame resolved the problem, and by the time I had proceeded a few rods further, the whole heavens were illuminated by a broad pyramid of fire.

An incendiary, it was supposed, had set fire to some shavings, perhaps, by depositing among

them a single coal or a piece of lighted paper. You might, probably, have trodden out the beginnings of the fire with your foot; and when I first saw it at a distance, a single bucket of water would have extinguished the flame; and yet, before a dozen of neighbors could be collected to the spot, the conflagration had attained such a height, that the waters of a river would have been required to quell the fury of the fire.

Now, it is quite likely that this act, with the destruction which it caused, and the crime with which it was involved, was the consequence of a single word. This germ, after shooting out into a quarrel, grew into a lawsuit, which did not fail to produce its proper fruit, ill-will, envy, and a desire for revenge. And this wish for vengeance, how easily might it have been checked at the outset? It is probable, that the incendiary, at that moment, would not have believed himself capable of such a crime; but the feeling, brooded upon, and the evil passions once allowed to rankle in the heart, how quickly do they plunge the individual in guilt, and bring ruin upon one of his fellow-creatures! See how great a matter a little fire kindleth! The Apostle might well say, that the tongue is a little member, but boasting great things!

Here we have it producing anger, strife, revengeful feelings, crime, and ruin. Then, the law must be called in to punish, and, with the gallows, or the state's prison, to make a present settlement: but these are but the beginning of a long line of consequences, to be closed only when eternity shall come to a close. And if these things are so, and who can doubt that they are, how can we be too cautious, in guarding against the commencement of those feelings, whose tendency is to such results? If the temporal consequences are so serious, and yet, serious as they are, if they are but trifles, as is undoubtedly the case, when compared with those which are to follow through an ever-beginning eternity, how watchful should we be, to stifle, in its birth, a passion, which, when it has attained strength, is so irresistible in its progress, as to bear down, in its fury, all restraints imposed by law, and even those presented by natural affection.

If human laws are not so broken, or, if they are not so executed, as to bring punishment upon the angry man, and if God, in his mercy, grants him repentance, and he so escapes the wrath to come—yet will he be sure to reap such bitter fruits in this world, that he will find them a sore, but also a very just recompense, for yielding to his evil passions.

How many are they who will appear fretful, and irritable, towards those who have only been kind and affectionate towards them, who have borne with their follies, and sought to cover their faults! What can such expect, but to feel the sting of remorse, rankling in their bosom, when those kind friends are taken from them? It is vain, then, to wish their return, in order to display that affection they should have shown before. What would not a man sacrifice, if he could, by it, but bring such injured relatives again to life, that he might show towards them that kindness and forbearance, which, when it was in his power, he refused to show! Reader, if you have an indulgent mother, a kind father, a brother, a sister, or any relative, who is dear to you, oh, be careful, how you let your anger rise against them: you know not how soon such friends may be taken from you, and then, when it is too late, you will regret, and your heart will sink within you, at the remembrance of every act of unkindness you have shown towards them. Perhaps you prize them not now, because you are so much accustomed to the comfort of their society; for it is in the nature of man, only, to value his blessings when he feels their want; but if the time should come, when some of them are call-

ed to leave you, (and come it must, unless you are first taken away,) then, will you learn to estimate the happiness you enjoy, in having them; then, will every act of unkindness, you have exhibited towards them, rise like a spectre before your mind, to disturb your repose; then, you may find, that an act you took but a few minutes to perform, or a word spoken in a moment of time, may implant a pang in the heart, which years may not remove. Setting aside the more important consequences, which regard eternity, should not those which follow in this world make us watchful, that we are not betrayed by the influence of a moment, to do that, for which the anguish of a whole life can be no recompense, and the remembrance of which, may be a source of sorrow to us, to the latest hour of our existence? How cautious, then, should we be, to extinguish the first kindling of wrath, while it is yet a little thing, and a small effort would suppress it; but if we fan the flame, instead of resisting it, its tendency is to burst into a broad blaze, utterly beyond our power to control.

Our angry passions, as well as all our other feelings, grow by their indulgence, but in their early stages may be kept down, and almost extinguished, if resolutely resisted. That this is

true, is proved by the fact, that some men, who have had such fiery tempers, or who, for a while, have left their passions so unrestrained, that they could not be borne with in society, have yet, from feeling the necessity, brought at last their tempers into such complete subjection, that many supposed they were free from any disposition to anger.

Of this, if the stories which are told of him are true, we have a remarkable instance in the character of General Washington. In his youth, it is said, his passions were so hot, and his temper so sudden, as scarce to be borne with; and yet, in his after life, we find him so calm, that in his history we have scarce an indication of his possessing any passions at all. Every one who has read his correspondence, must be astonished that any man could keep his temper unruffled, under such trying circumstances as he was continually placed in. It is probable, that no individual ever was subjected to such constant annoyance as he was, during the seven years of the revolution, not only from the common enemy, but from Congress and the people, from the officers and the soldiers, from his personal enemies, and personal friends. At times, it appeared as if the whole community had combined to prove him, and under all,

we find him with such perfect command over a temper naturally impatient and haughty, that we have to look at his early history, to discover that he ever had any temper at all. And if he could do it, why cannot every man learn to do it? What is wanting, but to feel the importance of such control, and a steady resolution to effect it? I have myself known a man, whom, for many years in which I had been acquainted with him, I had never seen him the least ruffled, though I had seen him very severely tried. I supposed he was naturally of a calm temperament, until mentioning it one day, some one observed he had known him as one of the most passionate men he had ever met with. That man had more influence over the minds of others, than any man I have ever seen—the natural consequence it was, of his power over himself.

Thus we see, that a temper, however violent, and however sudden, may be controlled. And yet, it is very hard to bring into subjection any passion which has once been allowed a license. A wild colt taken from the fields may with much more ease be rendered tractable, than can the horse that has before been ridden, has refused to go, and obtained the mastery. In like manner, our passions: each time they gain

an advantage over us, become the more difficult to be tamed, and the wider range do they take in their freedom. The horse that has gained a series of conquests over his master, can be broken at last only at the risk of breaking his own neck, and his rider's also: our passions, likewise, when for a long time they have been victorious, can only be subdued after a long and painful struggle; and we cannot be sure of victory even at last.

If the matter is so difficult, and so uncertain, where is the encouragement to begin? The success of others shows that success is possible, and although ordinary efforts may fail, there is yet a way in which it may be rendered certain; and, setting aside again the higher motive of our eternal interests, and our duty towards God, one would think there was sufficient inducement to make the attempt, in the deprivation of comfort, the disgrace and contempt entailed upon an individual, by the contrary course. To exemplify this, I could find hundreds of cases, of persons who had become so accustomed to be controlled by their own passions, that they could be led to do almost any thing, by those who would take the pains to act upon them. There is nothing that is so silly, nothing so mean and contemptible, nothing so wicked,

that a passionate man may not be led to do it. Accordingly, we see such an one is commonly made the cat's-paw to those who have more coolness and better calculation, but perhaps less conscience than himself. Every such man is but a puppet upon the stage, performing all sorts of antics before the spectators, not one of which it does of its own will, but as it is guided by its master who pulls the wires. Perhaps the puppet master is sly enough to keep out of sight, but all the world knows he is there, directing every movement; but as to the puppet itself, that never so much as suspects it. The boys on a farm will sometimes take advantage of the pugnacious disposition of two rams in a flock of sheep, for their own amusement. They have only to toss down an ear of corn between them, and the two heroes will set to and batter one another's heads, much to the gratification of the mischief-loving urchins, who stand calmly by to observe the sport; and if the combatants are pretty nearly matched, they will fight like a couple of fools, until neither has strength enough to pick up the corn, even if, as will commonly be the case, the rest of the flock have not in the mean time devoured it. But it is not necessary that it should be a thing of so much value as an ear of corn, to bring the rivals into hostile ac-

tion; a stick or a stone will answer just as well—and even a movement of the arm, by which they are made to look towards each other, is entirely sufficient: the look is construed into an affront, and they immediately set to, as if it was the world for which they were about to fight.

Those who have observed the habits of their own kind, must see that silly sheep are not the only animals ready to quarrel for so small a thing as an ear of corn, or for a thing so worthless as a stick or a stone; neither are they the only creatures who can read defiance in a simple look, or who think it is better to put up with a clever beating, than to bear with such an affront.

In every school, may be found boys of proud spirits and hasty tempers, who are always ready for a quarrel, and there will almost always be found some mischief-maker, who will delight to bring them to loggerheads. Perhaps he will tell one that another has done something, or said something, or, it may be, thinks something, which will excite his jealousy; and to the other he may, perhaps, say the very same thing. Both being thus prepared, a word, a look, or an accidental movement of either, is enough for a beginning; and the quarrel or the battle which follows, is as sweet as a feast of

nuts to the prime mover, who very coolly waits to observe the result, as if it was a thing in which he had not been concerned.

Now the worst of it is, that when we cease to be boys, we do not cease to be fools, neither does roguery leave us with childhood; but the irritable boy commonly grows up into the passionate man, and the young mischief-maker becomes, in time, the gray-headed schemer; and the quarrels of childhood are harmless in their consequences, as compared with the differences of more matured age, except so far as the one may be considered the hot-bed, in which the seed is sprouted from which the other springs. As men grow older, their disagreements may not so often result in a pitched battle, as they have done in their early years, but they will be productive of much more pain. There may be fewer black eyes, and bloody noses; but there will be more bitterness of spirit, a wider spread and more serious unhappiness among friends and kindred, and more settled resolutions for revenge. This vindictive spirit is much more likely to break forth then into crime; or, if human law imposes so much restraint as to prevent that, it may not the less be productive of wretchedness to all concerned—it may not the less deprive the individual who harbors it, of the respect of all good men.

How important, then, is it, that even in the early years of childhood, mankind should be taught to put a restraint upon their angry passions; but when it has been neglected in youth, it is still never too late to begin, although every day that it is deferred, will make the work more difficult.

If in youth the angry passions can with so much more ease be brought into subjection, can those who have the management of children be too diligent in checking the first disposition to wrath? can they be too careful in guiding them into the paths of peace? And should not the young be put on their guard, and taught, of themselves, to watch against any propensity to a hasty temper? And when a man has attained to maturity, with a disposition to sudden anger unchecked, he should not, on that account, be afraid to grapple with it. If his evil inclinations have increased with his years, and he feels them now more fixed than in his youth, the energy and determination of his character have also increased, and he can consequently bring more power to the contest. And are his motives for resolute resistance any less than they have been in former years? His experience of their unhappy consequences, one would think, should make him more eager and deter-

mined to eradicate them, rather than incline him, as is commonly the case, quietly to submit to their dominion. Because his irritability has heretofore deprived him of the comfort of his life, it is no reason he should allow it to mar the enjoyment of the time that yet remains to him; because he has always made himself a nuisance to his acquaintance, it does not follow that it is right for him always to do so; that he has formerly been despised and a laughing-stock to all who know him, does not prove the expediency of his remaining contemptible. Surely a man must be in love with disgrace if he can think so.

But it is time to speak of the means by which any one may bring this evil in subjection to himself. All see that it is desirable; the angry man himself, feels and regrets his bondage. He sees that he is constantly exposed to contempt, and is mortified by it; he finds continual inconvenience himself, and he knows how uncomfortable he renders others, and those, especially, whom he most desires to please. There is, then, no want of motive, and, of course, the wish to be free is not wanting; why then does not the man make the necessary effort? Perhaps he does make some feeble attempt, but it only proves his weakness; the failure shows

him how helpless is his slavery—it is the bondage of the soul. He might rise in his strength, and shake off his shackles, but he has no spirit thus to exert his power. Occasionally, one will muster resolution to show that it may be done; it is, however, but one in the thousand, while the other nine hundred and ninety-nine remain bondmen still. Not but that they wish to be free, for they all feel that their master is a tyrant, and his chains gall them; but the fetters are round their soul, and they cannot get the courage to face their oppressor. They might stretch forth their hand and strangle the despot, but they quail beneath his eye, and their strength becomes weakness. Man's strength is weakness. He cannot say, with confidence, that he can master his weakest passion; and while he looks only to himself, how can he expect to cope with those that are strong—with those, that years of habit have confirmed in the mastery over him.

But there is a way by which every passion, however strong, may be controlled, by which every evil habit, however confirmed by time, may be rooted out; so that the man, who has heretofore been only an annoyance to his friends, may become a blessing to all who know him; so that he, who has heretofore been de-

spised, who has been a laughing-stock to the world, and an object of pity to all good men, may make himself respected and beloved, a comfort to all connected with him, and a blessing to the world. That way is pointed out to us in the gospel. There we are told that our hearts are depraved, continually inclined to evil, and the experience of our lives, and of every day of our lives, tells us it is true; we are there informed of our weakness, that we are wholly insufficient of ourselves to help ourselves; and who, that has gone to the battle in his own strength, has not been informed by the result of the same truth? How few, how very few, have ever succeeded in overcoming any long indulged passion, or in rooting out any established evil habit? And in the few cases where this appears to have been done, it will, probably in every instance, be found, on nearer inspection, that it has been the force of circumstances, or the removal of temptations, or perhaps the decay of the passions themselves, by which the effect has been produced; and it is very likely, that, in no one case, it can be proved to have been effected by the voluntary exercise of the power of an individual over himself.

The same book which teaches us our weakness and insufficiency, tells us also of the power

of God, of his readiness to give it to those who sincerely ask it of him, and of its ability to support, to strengthen, to render victorious, all who thus faithfully ask, and consequently receive the promised aid. And that book reports, for our encouragement, hundreds of instances, where the event has proved the truth of the promise, and the reality and sufficiency of the divine help. But, if we had no historic record of the fulfilment of the assurance, yet may each one of us, who is disposed to make the trial obtain for himself decided proof of God's faithfulness to his promise; and as every one has witness in himself of the corruption of his own heart, and as all who have looked to their own strength have proved its weakness, even so thousands, who have distrusted themselves, and have in sincerity and humble faith sought the aid of the Almighty, have made full proof of his readiness and of his power effectually to aid them.

In order, then, for the wrathful man to overcome his angry passions, it is only necessary that he should become a Christian, that he should pray like a Christian, that he may act as a Christian. Not a disciple in name, but he must be one in heart—in sincerity and in truth. Then may we expect to see his angry spirit

changed to meekness and mildness—to find patience where before we met with irritability—forbearance and long-suffering, in the place of rashness and the disposition to revenge—kindness and gentleness, where before was harshness and obduracy.

That such have been the transforming influences of the Spirit of God upon the hardest hearts, we have thousands of instances to prove, both in the ancient and the modern histories of the church; and we may see them before us in our own times, and most of us among our own acquaintance. Look at Naaman, the proud and haughty conqueror, the chief captain of the Syrian host; see him foaming with rage at the supposed slight from the prophet; but he is persuaded by his servants to follow the direction of the man of God, and, converted by the display of Almighty power which followed, his heart becomes softened; and now, see him again meek and subdued standing before the same prophet, and humbly seeking the blessing of the good man's prayers; and then, returning to his own land, his heart and his temper more changed than was his skin, by the removal of the loathsome leprosy.

Look at Saul of Tarsus, standing as a witness against the martyr Stephen, and exulting

in his death. See him, then, with his skirts still smoking with the blood of the murdered saint, and breathing out threatening and slaughter, seeking out other victims, and delivering to prison and to death, not only men, but, in the hardness of his heart, not sparing the gentle sex. And see him, when he has seized all within his reach, with his appetite for blood still unsatiated, going in a rage even to distant cities, to seek new victims. But the influence of divine power reaches his heart, and behold! the ravening wolf is tamed, and has become a faithful watch-dog to the flocks upon which before he preyed; the fierce, springing, blood-thirsty tiger, which was crouching with out-stretched claws, and flashing eyes, ready to leap upon its unprotected victim, has been changed to the gentle, forbearing, patient lamb. Saul the persecutor, the murderer, becomes, by the action of the gospel upon his heart, Paul the Apostle, still zealous and energetic, but ready to do all things, and to suffer all things, so that he may save some from sin and death; and rejoicing, by his labors and sufferings, to save even those who have reviled and persecuted him. Could Paul, or could Naaman have effected such a change in their character by their own unassisted efforts?

And in modern times, we may find abundant instances, of a similar kind, by looking into the history of missions. There may we see, in the South Seas, haughty chiefs, who had all their lives left their passions uncontrolled, and who, on the least provocation, did not hesitate to take the life of any of their subjects, when brought under the influence of the gospel they have become gentle and forbearing, and, like Saul of Tarsus, faithful preachers of the word. Even the fierce cannibal of New Zealand, who would not hesitate to murder and devour his own wife, if she offends him, may be seen, when he becomes a Christian, sitting with meekness at the feet of Jesus.

But upon no one, is the transforming influence of the gospel more manifested than upon the native Indians of America. From their earliest infancy are they taught to cherish the spirit of revenge, and regard it as a virtue; they are brought up to set light by the sufferings of others, and to despise them themselves; they early learn to take the lives of their fellow-creatures, and fearlessly to expose their own. If one was seen to shed a tear, he would bring upon himself the contempt even of the women and children of his own tribe; and the feeblest would allow his enemies to roast him at a

slow fire, without suffering the agony of so cruel a death to extract from him a single groan. But the gospel has been sent among them. And men have listened to it, who were warriors from their childhood; who, at an age when the boys in our own streets are trundling their hoops, have been springing from an ambush upon their enemies, have buried the tomahawk in the brains, and tearing, perhaps with their teeth, the scalp from their victim, have proudly fastened the bloody trophy to their foot, as a witness of their exploit. And these men have been ready, on a slight provocation, to bring destruction upon whole villages, without compunction killing the unoffending women and children of their enemies; or, in their turn, seeing their own wives, and their own offspring slain, and scalped, before their face, without shedding a tear for their sufferings, or heaving a sigh for their fate. But, when the word has vanquished their hearts, the proud and haughty savage becomes the meek and quiet Christian, bearing insult unmoved, and injuries without seeking to return them; he can now sympathize in the pains of another, and is no longer ashamed to be seen weeping at the sight of suffering. What, but a power more than human, could effect such a change?

His heart was before harder than adamant, and his muscles seemed as destitute of feeling, as though they had been moulded in stone. Where should we seek for an embodied fiend, if not in the American Indian, dancing with exultations around the captive, he is racking his ingenuity to torment? And when we see the same man seeking out the prisoner, not to tie him to the stake, but to bind up his wounds, we can scarcely believe it to be the same man. It is not too much to say, that he has been born again. Who can believe, that this man has effected such a change in himself by his own efforts? And no other can, more than the Indian, have power, of himself, over passions which have grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength; but God can—and if his aid is asked in humble faith, he will so direct and assist the efforts of an individual, as to enable him finally to vanquish the evil propensities of his nature.

When, therefore, a man makes a profession of religion, his angry passions, as well as all other inordinate passions, are expected to be overcome. The world expects it, and it has a right to expect it; and where this consequence does not follow, that person is set down as a hypocrite, and it is well if a general reproach is not

brought upon religion itself; yet it may be that neither part of this judgment is correct, and that some, who give way at times to angry feelings, may yet be true disciples of Christ. But still, to speak of an irritable Christian is to use a contradiction in terms. A follower of Jesus, so far as he is a follower, has overcome all evil propensities; and though we cannot expect in any, that perfection which was exhibited by our Lord, yet will the true disciple be so watchful as not to dishonor his Master. But the fact is, we are sanctified but in part; and I would trust, that some who are not so vigilant as they should be, may yet be found among the true Israelites at last. I would not say so to encourage any one to be satisfied with his state, who has his temper unsubdued; but, on the contrary, I would say, such an one has great reason to fear that his heart is not right. He is looking forward, and preparing for an abode in heaven; but if the fretful and irritable were admitted there, what sort of a heaven would it be?

When a Christian gives way to anger, he disgraces himself. But what of that? he has a stronger motive for watchfulness. He loves his Savior, or he would not be a Christian. Then let him consider, that he dishonors his Master, and puts him to shame before the world, and

that thought will give a greater impulse to his efforts, than can any personal discredit he may bring upon himself. Moreover, when he offered his heart to his Savior, he entered into an engagement to obey him, who told his disciples that they must be meek and gentle, forbearing, and forgiving. If he had signed a bond to one of his fellow-men, would he think for a moment of not abiding by its terms? if he had given a promise to a friend, or to an enemy, would he refuse to fulfil it? And shall he make his Divine Master, whom he has promised to obey, of less account than every other?

He who loves Jesus, admires his character, and what a man admires, he must wish to imitate. He has set us an example that we should walk in his steps, and in nothing more than in patience, and in long-suffering; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously. To Him may we always with safety commit our cause; and let us, then, when wronged or provoked, with patience, and in faith and love, leave it to Him to protect us. And should it not be to us a boon, and a privilege, thus to step in the footprint, where our Savior has trod before us?

But Jesus was sometimes angry, it may be

said! But when was he angry? Was it when the Samaritans refused to admit him into their city—or when his own townsmen wished to throw him from a precipice—when one of his disciples betrayed him, and another denied him—was it when he was smitten by his enemies upon the face—when they spat upon him, and plucked the hair from his cheek—when he was falsely accused, and condemned—when he was mocked and scourged—when he was led forth as a malefactor before an assembled nation—or when he was reviled as he hung in anguish upon the cross? We do not read that any of these, or at any other times of personal provocation, he displayed angry feelings, but was always meek and forbearing, and allowed himself to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. And if he did not then allow his wrath to rise against his persecutors, surely his followers should not permit theirs to break out, at any merely personal indignity. But he was angry at times; but it was when he saw the widow oppressed—when he met with hypocrisy and vice—when God's name, and his temple were dishonored—then, he did not fear to lift up his voice. And his disciples need not fear to follow his example, and to show their indignation at every form of sin. Here, and here only, can

we be angry, and sin not; and, God forbid that the Christian should encourage any form of wickedness, by failing to lift up his voice against it. God forbid that he should hear his Maker's name blasphemed, that he should see his sanctuary polluted, or his day dishonored, without showing displeasure at the desecration.

But, unless for sin, a Christian cannot show his wrath, except, in so much departing from his profession. If he would be happy in this world, he must not do it; but this is a low, unworthy, motive; not to be despised, however, in itself, but contemptible, as compared with the higher views by which a Christian should be yielded. If, then, he would have any well-grounded hope, any full assurance of a better inheritance, if he would wish to dwell in the presence of God, if he wishes to see and to resemble his Savior—let him watch against a wrathful spirit, which is the very opposite of that which is required to fit him for his desires.

And, let every man keep a guard upon the first risings of passion. Be not satisfied in preventing its outbreak into words of anger, and the act of revenge, but repress it in its very beginnings. Do as our Savior commanded, and check the first thought of resentment, the

earliest feelings of anger, before they get beyond control. The little matter kindleth not a great fire, if pains be taken to smother the flames when they first begin to rise.

Chapter V.

On the Unprofitableness of Pride.

"Those that walk in pride, he is able to abase."

A ship had just been hauled off from the wharf, and cast her anchor in the stream; and there she laid, her hull appearing from the shore like a long black line, as it were an immense snake, floating upon the water. She was a beautiful object as she rode at her anchor, and her lofty masts, and wide-stretched yards promised to display a mass of canvass, which would make her appear still more imposing to the sight, when the winds should push her swiftly and majestically through her proper element.

And yet half a dozen feeble creatures, appearing comparatively like ants moving about her rigging, and along her sides, can set this

mighty machine in motion, can check or accelerate her speed, can turn, direct, or stop her movements, according to their own pleasure. Man can do all this, but he can only do it by the help of the winds which the Almighty has made to blow, and the waters with which he has flooded the lower parts of this earth; nay, the very faculties and powers by which he controls the elements, are the work of God's hands, and are continued in being, and supported in action by his providence. And yet, man is proud of what he can do; but he thinks not of that God, who has created, and who has sustained him in life, who has given him his abilities, and provided the material on which alone they can be employed. Yes, this creature, this feeble dependent creature, man, is proud, and it is with the pride of man that I have now to do.

Let us go on board the ship, and see who we can find there. The captain has not yet come on board, but there are two mates, and before the mast are ten seamen. The ship is of more than four hundred tons burthen, and heavily sparred, and it seems to be a small crew for so large a vessel, but they are picked men, square-built, weather-beaten sea-dogs. But there is one youth among them, taller than the rest,

and of a slender make; he has been well educated, and his manners are not the manners of a sailor. He is going in the ship, before the mast; and what induces him to be engaged in an occupation so much below the station which his education has fitted him to fill?

It is his pride. He is nineteen years old, and is setting out on his second long voyage. His pride sent him on the first, and his pride is now sending him on the second. About two years before this time, he had been engaged in an employment on shore, and had some misunderstanding with his employer. He knew that he was wrong, but would not acknowledge it, and therefore the difference could not be reconciled. His father, despairing from his former ill success in his attempts to overcome the stubbornness of his pride, at last told him he saw no better way for him to do than to go to sea, though by this he was in a manner destroying his own hopes, which he had built upon the future prospects of this son. When the poor man had made up his mind to swallow the bitter draught, (for to him it was bitter indeed, no less, than the cutting off of his dearest earthly hopes,)—he called to his son, and said to him,—"My dear boy, you know that you have always had an inclination to go to sea. I have hitherto been un-

willing, because I thought that it would neither be for your advantage, nor tend to your happiness. I allowed you to choose your profession, and such a situation as would suit yourself; but, since you have cut yourself off from advancement there, I do not know that you can do better than to follow your first inclination. Perhaps, (and I trust, my dear son, it will be so,) that this course will prove, after all, to be the best, and that you may succeed and do well. If it should be so, I shall be satisfied, for your happiness has been my aim ever since you was born." The father desired the son to consider the proposition, and if he had changed his mind with regard to going to sea, to say so, and he would try and strike out another plan for him.

Now it so happened that the youth had lost all disposition for a sailor's life, but as some time before he had been very much bent upon it, and his friends had found very great difficulty in preventing his going to sea, he felt it would be a compromise of his dignity, to acknowledge that he had changed his mind. He had changed his mind, nevertheless, and now felt as much repugnance to a seafaring life, as he had been before disposed to it. He had formerly thought it would be very pleasant to see foreign lands; he looked upon the sea as

the place for adventure, and there were ideas of romance connected with it, which a little more knowledge had served to dissipate. An insight into the degradation to which seamen are subjected, and a more correct estimate of the hardships which they must endure, and of the meagre profits returned for their excess of labor and suffering, left him but little inclination to adopt their profession. But, as I have said before, he was unwilling to acknowledge that he was in error; his pride would not allow of it, and, therefore, he entered into his father's plan, and began to make preparation for his voyage. Thus his pride sent him to sea the first time that he went, and the reader will allow that his folly was as great as his pride.

He was absent nearly two years upon his first voyage, and returned heartily tired of the experiment. He was tired of keeping his watch on deck, exposed to wet and cold, and of turning into a wet birth when his watch was out; and he was tired of being in subjection to arbitrary officers, of being at the beck and call of coarse and ignorant men whom he despised. He was thoroughly sick of ship's fare too. Salt junk, (or, as the sailors called it, mahogany, or horse beef,) was never suited to his taste. The sea bread, though well enough

when it was new, he found after a long voyage was apt to become musty, or, what was worse, filled with vermin, so that when a biscuit was laid upon the deck, it would appear to move of itself. Besides these two dry articles, there was scarce any thing provided for the seamen's fare. If he did not like the quality of the food, still less did he like the manner of eating it like a hog out of a tub; for sailors sit together round a small tub, or kit, as it is called, into which each one dips for himself, and, without plate or any other assistance except his jack-knife, with which he cuts ropes and scrapes the greasy mast. He thus eats his food more in the manner of a savage, than of a civilized man. To wash down those choice viands, morning and evening, each sailor was allowed a quart pot of tea, boiled in the cook's coppers, after beign sweetened with molasses. This, when it was served out to the sailors, after being boiled in the same vessel in which had been cooked the beef or pork for their dinner, and which was not very well cleaned, was of about the color, and, to the palate of our young voyager, about as well flavored as ink, and he always preferred drinking water in preference, though that was not very pleasant to take, after standing some months in a cask, and especially after it had

begun to be ropy. Moreover, he found he had in no wise bettered his condition by all his labors and deprivations: in fact, he was rather poorer than when he went from home, for he was then well provided with clothes, which were now gone, and the balance of his voyage was not enough to replace them.

It may be supposed he had little inclination to try another voyage, and in fact he had not. His parents, too, were unwilling he should continue to go to sea, and his father told him, that as he was yet young, he might still choose another profession. But as he had gone to sea, leaving the impression that it was in accordance with his own inclination, he was as averse now to acknowledge that he had been mistaken, as he had been at first to acknowledge that he had changed his mind. He therefore told his friends that he had resolved to follow the sea; and his father, though he was unwilling that he should, did not oppose it, because he knew the stubbornness of his disposition: but he took care to lay open to him an easy path in other callings, in hopes to tempt him to change his purpose. The son saw the opportunities, and longed to improve them, but his pride conquered, and he prepared to start upon another voyage.

This brings me to where I was before. The

youth had come on board the ship just before she left the wharf, and had helped to haul her into the stream; the other seamen had been on board for some days. The anchor was let go, the rigging laid up, and the decks cleared, and the crew collected upon the forecastle. And there stood this young man, surrounded by his future companions, and among them were liars and drunkards, thieves and profligates—nay, there was at least one murderer on board; but, among them all, there was not a blacker heart than beat in the bosom of that youth, for that heart was filled with pride. He would not lie, nor get drunk, nor steal. And why not? His pride prevented him. The world might think it was a very good quality which had such an influence—it does think so; for what is more common, than to hear of a just pride, of a proper pride, or of a becoming pride? But God sees in all pride the seeds of rebellion; and he sees that there is nothing else, which so certainly leads his creatures to set his authority at defiance.

In nothing more than in the views he takes of this quality, do the thoughts of the Almighty differ from the thoughts of his fallen creatures, and his ways from their ways! They commend it as a virtue; he condemns it as a vice,

and the worst of vice; while they cherish and encourage it with their praise, he is preparing to punish it by the fierceness of his wrath.

How does it appear to those holy beings who surround God's throne? Do you suppose they ever speak of pride as a just pride, or commend it as being proper or becoming? Would they wish to cherish it int heir own bosoms, or in their companions? can they be pleased to see it in the breasts of those poor frail mortals, who they would delight to see coming in humble penitence to God? Their benevolent minds take joy in view of the happiness of every created being: how, then, can they see, with complacency, a quality which has reduced to misery so many of their fellow-creatures? They delight to honor their Maker, and to do his will; can they, then, approve those feelings which have caused so many of his subjects to set at defiance his authority, and openly to break his commands?

They have seen angels like themselves once pure and holy, and, till pride obtained a footing in their hearts, delighted to spread joy and happiness; but, from that moment, they became impious, loving impurity, and striving to extend misery and wretchedness among their fellow-creatures. They have seen man living in inno-

cent happiness, in the pleasant garden his Creator had planted for him, and they have seen the chief of those fallen spirits who were once as benevolent as themselves, envying this happiness, and seeking to destroy it. And on what point did the tempter make his attack? He appealed to the pride of his then innocent victim: if he can arouse her pride, there is no act of rebellion to which he may not persuade her. He made her believe she was duped by the Almighty: "Ye shall not surely die," he said, "but, yé shall know good from evil;" as if he had said, "God, to keep you in subjection, gave you this command, but now, stir up your spirit, and you shall be free." We all know, to our cost, that the appeal was not in vain. And the holy angels have seen the same tempter assailing the first-born of this woman upon the same point, when he urged him to murder his brother; and from that time have they seen this blackest passion of the human heart leading mankind into the worst of crimes, until, at last, they saw the Lord of glory bleeding upon the cross, placed there by his own creatures, impelled to the crime by this very passion. And since this dreadful exhibition, they have seen this worst quality of a depraved heart driving the wretched sinners, for whom

Jesus died, from the acceptance of the salvation so dearly purchased.

Now, is the view which these bright and holy intelligences take of this passion, or, is the view of mankind the correct one? If there is truth in the word of God, there is no quality more hateful in his sight, there is no sin he will more severely punish. Let us, then, look at the consequences. Reader, could we go for a moment together into the eternal world, I should be able there to show you consequences, which would make the blood curdle in your veins for horror. Could you but look into the bottomless pit, where the murky brightness of the flames serves but to make "darkness visible," you would there see sinners tortured for their pride in that dreadful fire, and the very sight of such agony would be enough to dry your eye-balls in their sockets. Above the roaring tempest of those flames, you would hear the piercing, deafening shriek of hopeless anguish. You would there see fiends, in the full exercise of their pride, striving to invent new torments for the victims they have deluded, though they must themselves be chained in the same horrors forever. Could I but bring you within reach of such sights and sounds, there would be no occasion for me to add another word.

But mankind, when they cannot but believe that such consequences must follow this rebellion against God, strive to persuade themselves that they are distant, and they are prone to shut their eyes against distant evil. Some have hearts even so bloated with pride, as to say, or to feel, when in no other way they can get rid of the unpleasant subject, that if they must be tortured, they will brace themselves to bear it as they can. Puny creature! Brace yourself to endure the wrath of the Almighty! Did you never see a poor worm thrown into a blazing fire? Did you not observe how the tortured thing would curl itself, and then with a jerk straighten out again; then curl up the other way, again stretch out its length, and twist and writhe, until at last it jerked itself in two? Reader, did ever an idea like that suggested above, enter your mind? Then, believe me, you are less able to withstand the burning indignation of the Almighty, than was the poor reptile to resist the fury of the blaze. Like it, if you die with your proud heart unsubdued, you must writhe and twist with agony in the flames kindled by the breath of your offended God; but, you will not, like the poor thing, be consumed; for the fire, to which the Almighty has condemned his enemies, will torture, but he

had given it no power to destroy them. If you will not now humble yourself before God, when he pours his indignation upon you, you will feel humble enough; though your proud heart may still rebel, when his strong hand is upon you, you will feel how contemptibly mean and little you are.

I have tried to lead you, reader, to think of the eternal consequences of a proud heart unsubdued before God; let us now try to see what are its effects in time. We have already seen, that the pride of a man's heart may prevent him from dishonesty and drunkenness, and from many other vices which would degrade him in the eyes of his fellow-men. And I have already observed, that mankind are disposed, in view of such fruits, to approve the quality. But, is there any thing really good, in actions which flow from motives so utterly selfish? Can those feelings be properly commended, which, though they may sometimes prevent a man from doing what would injure some of his fellow-creatures, cannot prevent him from offending his Maker, from his being ungrateful to his constant Benefactor, from grieving his merciful, long-suffering Savior—which cannot prevent him from inflicting misery even upon his own kind, when he can thereby exalt himself? It is

very clear that mankind have had but little reason to congratulate themselves on the good their pride has done them; and I believe that no individual who cherishes it, will be found, on close examination, to have derived a balance of good, as compared with the evils it has brought upon him, even in this world. It is the purpose of these pages to attempt an illustration of these last remarks, by showing the influences of this evil passion upon the destiny of the youth whose story I have begun to give, and shall now continue.

I have said, the seamen were collected upon the forecastle of the ship, after they had completed their work. They there began to discuss the merits of their ship, and of the officers who were to command them. The ship, they all agreed, was a beautiful craft, and would sail and work like a pilot boat; and the officers, they also thought, were smart fellows and good seamen. "They are all that, you may depend," observed an old sea-dog; "I have sailed from the same port these ten years, and have known them both, and the second mate is a right clever fellow; at least, he used to be when he was before the mast. How he'll be, now he walks the quarter-deck, I can't say. But he's a sailor—there can be no mistake about that."

"The chief mate seems to be a very clever man, too," observed our youngster.

"He speaks very soft, doesn't he, my lad?" asked the old man; he was the Nestor of the crew, and about thirty years of age, which is old for those who give themselves up to vice, as do seamen in general. "You will find he will speak louder when he gets into blue water. He's a hard horse, that mate."

"I've no objection," said the youth; "I've seen hard horses before."

"You'll find him hard enough to suit you, my boy, before the voyage is out. He's just the ugliest fellow I know of. He has been master of a ship, and he is known to be a smart officer and a good merchant; but no one will give him a ship, because he uses his crew so ill. On his last voyage he knocked out the brains of one of his men with a heaver, and since then he has not been able to obtain a ship. He has been drifting along shore now for several years, and our captain has given him a birth only out of charity, to save his family from starving. I guess you'll have him afoul* of you, my boy, before we're long at sea."

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* A term used by seamen when any thing is entangled or interferes with another.

"If he comes athwart my hawse, he'll get as good as he gives."

"Do you mean you'll strike him if he strikes you?"

"To be sure I do," said the youth, coolly; "Neither he nor any other man strikes me, but he gets as good in return, or, at least, as good as I can give." So saying he went below.

When he was out of hearing, one of the crew observed, "Our youngster talks pretty large for a chap that can hide under the lee of a belaying pin. I guess he'll sing another tune when old Blow-hard gets afoul of him."

"Now, I think he'll be as good as his word," said the old seaman. "He has the proudest look I ever saw; I should not wonder if the mate had his hands full this time, and, at any rate, he'll find he has a stubborn colt to break, if the chap does prove a match for him in the end."

The ship sailed in a few days, and had not been long at sea, before the young gentleman had his resolution put to the test. He had not been so active in the performance of ship's duty, as some of his shipmates had expected from his appearance, and the mate had, as yet, shown no disposition to abuse the crew.

One night it was very dark and stormy, and,

as the gale increased, the crew were ordered to reef the topsails. H—— ran to the fore topsail halyards, and taking the coil off the belaying pin and laying it carefully upon deck, let the rope go. It had not been laid up fair, and, consequently, went aloft entangled and choked the block. He climbed up the back-stay and cleared the rope, but the hindrance had brought the mate forward, who immediately seized him by the collar, asking him why he did not see the halyards clear before he let them go.

"I laid them down clear, sir," said H——, "but they were not coiled fair."

"Do you thus answer me, you young rascal?" exclaimed the mate, at the same time drawing back his right fist to strike.

It is considered mutiny for a seaman to strike his officer at sea, and it is universally believed among them, that they will be hung for doing so. This passed instantly through the mind of H——, but at the same time he remembered the resolution he had made, never to allow himself to be struck. He knew that not only officers, but seamen also, are very prone to abuse youngsters on their first going to sea, and he had determined from the beginning, not to submit to it. He resolved that he would stick to his determination, and in the mean time, while the

thoughts were passing through his mind, he had instinctively drawn back his fist, in answer to the menace of his antagonist.

"Will you strike me, you villain?" said the mate.

"That depends upon yourself," replied H——, in a calm, steady voice.

The crew all stopped to await the result; a flash of lightning at that moment shew them plainly, the two as they stood threatening each other, the long weather-hardened figure of the mate, opposed to the slender form of the stripling, as they stood, each with his eyes fiercely fixed upon the other. The mate saw the matter was like to be more serious than he had expected, and probably remembered that he too was under authority, for he let go his hold, and walked off, ordering the men to lay aloft and reef the topsail. H—— sprang with the rest into the rigging, while his antagonist went muttering on the quarter-deck his threats of future vengeance, which he did not forget when a more suitable opportunity occurred.

The captain heard of the affair, and the next day told his officers, that he never allowed a man to be struck on board his ship. H—— had become rather a favorite with the captain, and he liked him all the better for his spirit.

Nevertheless, he determined to keep him in subjection, for he was an exact disciplinarian; but he said, that he preferred a lad that required the curb, to one who would want the spur.

After this, the voyage went pretty smooth. The ship proved, as was expected, a fine sailer; she passed every thing she met upon the ocean, and, of course, the captain felt proud of her; he felt proud of his crew also, for no other merchant vessel was worked so well. After a short passage, the ship arrived and cast anchor in Batavia roads: the crew had not, till then, known whither they were bound, and they now found themselves in a place they detested.

As soon as the ship was moored, a boat was manned to pull the captain on shore, where he took up his residence, and the mate had command of the vessel. The exact discipline the captain had maintained while he was on board, was disregarded as soon as he left the ship. The mate began to allow himself in the unrestrained use of intoxicating liquors, and, of course, was not always in a state to secure his authority, but well prepared for a quarrel; and he became very tyrannical towards all, but especially towards those against whom he harbored any ill-will.

Things went on, however, for several weeks

without any open rupture, till the man I have before mentioned as the oldest on board, and who was also one of the stoutest, fell out with the second mate. The chief mate came to the assistance of the other. They endeavored to put the man in irons, but could not so far subdue him; the mate then ordered the crew aft to his assistance. They came to him, but would none of them give help. Finding they could not overcome the opposition of the man, and that he disregarded the pistols which they had brought up to threaten him with, they ordered him into a Chinese boat, which lay along. He obeyed, and was forbid to come on board the ship again. This matter ended without any other serious consequences at the time, but the crew had been brought into opposition to their officers, and, from thenceforth, proceeded a continued system of annoyance on one part, and of resistance on the other. In this way things went on from bad to worse, till the crew became so exasperated, that it would have taken but a small matter to have brought about an open mutiny. In every step that was taken by the crew, H— was looked upon now, both by them and the officers, as the ringleader. He did not wish to expose himself, and was unwilling his shipmates should be exposed to legal punishment,

but he continued very nearly to nullify the authority of the mates, without breaking the letter of the law, while they, in their turn, proceeded from one act of tyranny to another. If both parties had been under the direct guidance of the father of pride, they could not, probably, have acted more in accordance with his will.

There was another ship lying in the same roads with the one I am speaking of, and on board of her the mate went one evening, and took among the boat's crew, one of the sailors, who was a Scotchman. This man found a countryman in the other vessel, and in the course of conversation, related to him the state of things in his own ship. "I'll tell you what it is, Alick," said his friend, "if I was in your place, I would not stay on board such a craft."

"Neither would I," said Alick, "if I could help it."

"And why cannot you help it, man. I'll tell you what, I don't mean to leave the port in the ship that I'm in now, for it's just such a craft as your own."

"What do you mean to do, then?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Alick, if you'll keep snug, and not be blabbing it to any one."

"To be sure, I'll not say a word, Geordie; you need not be afraid of me, man; I'm as snug as a pocket in a shirt."

"I knew you was a Scotchman, to be sure, and that's enough; now, just look to the starboard hand of the great canal there. Do you see, just in the wake of the moon, that low clipper schooner?"

"I cannot see her now, Geordie; but I know the craft you mean. She's a long low vessel, with taunt spars, and as black as night alow and aloft. She's a wicked looking thing, and if I was to come athwart her at sea, I should be getting ready to walk the plank. Now, if you are going about that sort of work, you need not tell me, Geordie, any thing about it."

"What do you take me for, a cut-throat, man? I tell you, the craft is a good, honest trader, and nothing like a pirate. She may smuggle a little for what I know, when she has a fair chance; but if she does, I don't see any great harm in that. She belongs to Port Jackson, and she's lost all her crew with the fever; there's but one man now on board of her, and he's just a countryman of our own. As soon as the nights get a little darker, he's coming to take me on boad of her, some time when it is my watch on deck. Then, if you like, he and I will come for you, and if you can get three or four clever fellows to go with you, we'll make up a crew for her at once."

"I should like it Geordie; but then, you see, I've three or four months' wages due, and I don't want to lose that."

"Oh, never mind that, you'll get double the wages on board of her, and soon make up the loss."

After some more talk upon the subject, Alick thought he would go, and when he returned to his own ship, he opened the matter to some of his comrades. They had determined to submit no longer to the tyranny, to which they were subjected, and Alick's plan seemed to open a very good mode of escape; accordingly, a number of his shipmates, and among the rest, H—— determined to go with him.

It was about a fortnight before the appointed time came, and, in the meanwhile, the whole number changed ther minds, except Alick and H——.

On the night appointed, Alick had the look-out upon deck, from two o'clock. About three, he heard a scratch on the copper under the bows: he looked over, and saw his friends in a boat, waiting for him.

"Bear a hand, now, man," said Geordie in a whisper. Alick hastened to awake H——. They had prepared for their departure, by tying every thing they possessed in their ham-

mocks and bags, fearing to make too much noise if they passed their chests into the boat. Having lowered their clothes to their friends, the two runaways slid down the cable into the boat, which was then pushed off, and in half an hour they were on board the schooner, where, from that time, was to be their home.

The schooner lay at a distance from the rest of the shipping, and when the young men looked round the next morning, they felt free and happy, like a pair of birds escaped from a cage. But except the greater liberty they enjoyed, they had little cause to congratulate themselves on their change of residence, for the schooner was not by any means so comfortable as the ship they had left. On board the latter, every thing was kept as neat as a new pin; the decks were as bright as a fresh planed board, and the sleeping births were clean and comfortable. But the schooner was an old vessel, and had been long employed in tropical climates; and, in consequence, was completely over-run with vermin, so that those on board of her preferred sleeping on deck, to going below. Even the decks were so invaded by innumerable hosts of ants, that it was impossible to keep any thing free from them, or to walk the deck without killing them by

thousands. On going below, the vessel was found to be infested by cockroaches; the lower side of the deck was covered with spiders, which spread as wide as a Spanish dollar, and every nook and corner was filled with vermin equally disgusting.

On board of this vessel H—— remained undisturbed, and without any communication with his countrymen, until one Sunday morning a boat pulled along side, and four men came on board. They were from an American brig, and had been to carry their captain on shore; they said they had determined to leave their vessel, and come to see if they could get births on board the schooner. She had become the general receiving vessel for all runaways, and accordingly it was agreed, that her boat should go the next night to take these men from the brig.

Geordie and H—— took the boat about midnight, and in an hour returned with this accession, which would complete the schooner's crew. Two of the new comers were lads on their first voyage; another of them was the brig's carpenter, a stout, rugged looking man, with nothing peculiar about him but the drawling tone of his voice. The fourth was a noble fellow. He was over six feet high, square built,

and with massy limbs, and, notwithstanding his bulk, was declared by his shipmates to have been the most active man on board the brig. Tom O—— was a native of the town of S——, where his vessel belonged, and was one of a numerous family, all of whom were giants in size and strength.

Tom was a well-formed man, and had regular and pleasing features; but the small pox had roughened his skin, which exposure to the weather had changed nearly to a mahogany color, contrasting strongly with his white teeth, his light blue eyes, and his flaxen hair and whiskers, which last he allowed to grow and meet under his chin. He appeared to be, and he was, a half savage; for though he was, in general, good-natured, and, as his shipmates all declared, a right clever fellow, yet he had a very fierce temper when excited, and he had always an independent, utterly reckless spirit. Such as he was, however, Tom was considered a great acquisition, both by the officers and the crew of the schooner, and, from the moment he came on board, he and H—— become intimate friends and companions.

The crew of the schooner now being complete, they began to think of making ready for sea, but their plans were not to be matured.

One morning, as they were all seated upon deck, at work upon the schooner's rigging, one of the boys looking over the side, exclaimed, "There's Captain F——!" All the men jumped upon their feet in an instant. There were approaching the schooner, the master of the ship as well as of the brig, with several armed boats from a Dutch man of war. The boats drew alongside, and a guard of marines came on board. In the mean time, all the vagrants had gone below, in hopes to hide themselves, and elude the search; but they were soon found and brought upon deck, and none offered any resistance, except H—— and his friend Tom.

H—— was the first one found, and, seeing how useless it would be to resist, he submitted and went on deck. There one of the marines attempted to urge him with his bayonet into the boat; his temper was roused, and he said to himself, "Shall I let myself be goaded on like a beast?" His pride would not allow of that, and he turned to wrest the weapon from his assailant. The Dutchman retreated, and H—— followed him up, till his captain stepped between them. "Silly boy," he said, "will you resist an armed force that has you so completely in their power?"

"I saw it was of no use, sir," said H——, "but I'll not be goaded about like a brute."

"Keep yourself quiet, then, and stand where you are," said the captain. "You see you will have to submit at last." H—— stood still, while the captain was talking with him, and in the mean time, all the others were brought upon deck, except Tom.

He was not captured so easy. He had armed himself with a handspike, and only laughed at the bayonets with which he was surrounded. In a voice, like the growling of distant thunder, he dared the Dutchmen to attack him, but not one would approach within the sweep of his handspike. He was truly a formidable figure as he stood, with his long brawny arms laid bare to the shoulder, and swinging a heavy stick, which must have crushed any man that had come within its reach. His captain told him resistance was useless. "That's very likely, captain," said Tom, "but I'd like to smash half a dozen of those Dutch rascals 'fore I give up."

"They must shoot you, you fool; if they cannot take you any other way."

"Can die but once, captain; and you know Tom won't flinch for fear of an ounce or two of lead."

The captain knew that well enough, and knew

also, his own interest too well to allow the marines to fire upon the best hand among his crew. He therefore determined to tire him out, and Tom finding he was to have no sport, as he would have considered a battle with the Dutchmen, at last yielded himself up.

There was then lying in the Roads of Batavia, an old line-of-battle-ship called the Tromp. She was a sheer hulk, having not so much as a single spar standing, and was kept moored for a prison-ship. On board of this vessel were the prisoners taken, and after passing down through several decks till they came to a place where the midnight was as light as the noonday, they were fettered in pairs round the stump of a mast, and a guard of marines placed over them.

At first they were disposed, with the recklessness of sailors, to make merry with their situation, and for some hours continued laughing and joking: but as the night advanced, and they found they could not lie down without incommoding one another, nor without the irons galling their ancles, their mirth subsided, and bitter cursings were vented instead. Tom swore that if he even came within reach of his captain again, he would strangle him; and no doubt, could he have placed his hand upon his

throat at that moment, he would have fulfilled his threat.

To the prisoners, the night appeared long and wearisome. The darkness of their dungeon was only broken by the feeble glimmer of the watch lamps, which threw just sufficient light around to make the place appear more dismal. There was no sound to break the dead silence which reigned about them, save the tread of the guard as they walked back and forward upon the deck, except, indeed, it was the rustling noise caused by the feverish movement, or the half-muttered curses of the prisoners themselves.

But the longest night will have an end, and, spite of the apparent tardiness of the time, to the wearied watcher as well as the rest of mankind, day dawned at last upon the prison ; but its light could not penetrate to the black hole, where the prisoners had their abode. It was to them, however, some relief from the gloomy silence of the night, to hear sounds of life and activity in the other parts of the ship, though in no other respect was their situation changed. It was a satisfaction, however, to know that it was day, although no one approached them except their guard, who uttered not a word as they marched up and down.

The ship's bell was struck every half hour, to note the time, and bell after bell was heard until the day was nearly half spent. The sailors had been grumbling some time at not having any breakfast, and at last began to think that the Dutchmen meant to starve them. They were discussing the matter with empty stomachs, when, about noon, a door opened in a bulk-head behind them, and the two captains entered with several Dutch officers.

Tom and his friend H—— were fettered together, and to them the visitors turned their attention. The captain of the ship first addressed the youth. "Don't you think you are a silly boy, to get into all this trouble. See what your folly has come to now."

"I see Captain," said H——, "but I should do the same again if I had the chance."

"And ain't you ashamed to be confined like a thief, in irons?"

"If I was a thief, I should, captain. But I'm not ashamed now, for I feel that the fetter is on the wrong foot."

"Where do you think your father and mother are now? Perhaps they are thinking of you, and hoping that you are doing well. What would they say, if they could see you here chained for a runaway? Would it not

break your poor mother's heart, you wicked boy ?"

H—— was overcome by the mention of his parents, and sobbed aloud. The captain of the brig next addressed Tom ; but all he could say, made no impression on the weather-beaten tar, who sternly sent back defiance for threats, and reproaches for reproach.

Here I shall leave them, and I would now ask my reader, what advantage they think the young man obtained from cherishing his pride ? There is no doubt, a hellish sort of satisfaction felt by the proud heart, in the exercise of the passion ; but is it a gratification most worthy of those, for whose sake Christ abased himself and submitted to an ignominious death, or of those fiends for whom no way of escape has been opened from the wrath of the Almighty ? How easily might this youth have escaped the suffering and degradation to which he was subjected, by nipping in the bud this baneful passion, before it had gained such power over him, as to make him brave ignominy, and make of himself a vagrant and an outcast, rather than bend his pride to acknowledge he was in fault, when he knew that he was so.

And is it not always the case that the proud heart, whatever form its pride may take, brings

little but weariness and sorrow to its possessor? It may indeed, for the sake of its vile gratification, brace its victim to the endurance of every sort of pain, and even, strange as it may appear, to the mortification of itself, by submitting to disgrace, rather than go back from the stand it has once taken, and thus acknowledge that it can make its possessor do wrong. It is surely the vilest of passions. When we analyze the workings of a proud heart, how hateful does it appear! From what other source, proceeds anger or revenge? what else has so often produced strife and murder, and wholesale rapine, and murders of war? what so soon sets friends and kindred at variance, and what so much prevents their reconcilement? In a word, what form of sin or misery is to be found among mankind, in which it does not show itself? There is nothing so vile, that in it this base passion will not seek for gratification. The sensualist makes his boast of his drunken frolics, as well as the duellist of his murders. The one feeds his pride on sins of the flesh, the other on sins of the spirit; and both alike will sin, each in his own way, to minister to the same passion.

And if to men, who will view it in its proper light, this vice is so hateful, how much more

must it appear disgusting to all pure and holy beings, who see in it the root and source of all sin which to them is so loathsome? And how much more must He hate it, who is the author and fountain of all purity, in whose sight the heavens themselves are unclean!

And if he hates it, will he not punish it? He surely will. He is a just God, as well as holy, and as powerful as he is just; and you, reader, and I, must stand before his throne at the judgment day. Consider, then, how you will appear in his presence. It will be with anguish of heart, which will shake every joint with the palsy of despair, if the pride of that heart has not been subdued before him—if now you refuse to submit to the reins of his government and the gentle guidance of his Spirit.

You cannot now conceive the agony of spirit you must then endure, if you die unrepentant, when you will seek to hide yourself, but cannot, from the all-seeing eye of God, which will be fixed upon you with the calm determination to punish. You can understand, perhaps, how uncomfortable the sailors I have mentioned felt, when they saw the guard approach, which they knew was to take them to prison. They rose instinctively to find some corner in which to hide themselves, though they knew it would

be in vain. Their case is but a feeble type of what yours will be, when, as you see your Judge approach, you will call upon the hills and rocks to cover you, though you know they are his servants and not yours, and that they cannot hide you from his all-searching eye. At the first, perhaps indistinct, view of your offended Lord, your bones will ache with the feverish anxiety to escape. But ah! you cannot! Now you may, if you will; but if you will not, then when you shall have the will, you shall not have the power.

I say what shall be, if you will not humble yourself before your Maker now. But, my dear reader, I hope better things of you, and that you will now submit to God. Is it too much he asks of you? Consider how the blessed Savior humbled himself for your sake! See him bowing before the vilest of his own creatures, to open the way of salvation for you! See him meekly bearing the reproaches of the vicious and profane, as he hung suffering upon the cross! And is it too much, when he asks, in return, that you will humble yourself before the pure Father of spirits? It cannot be! You will not be so base, so ungrateful as to say so. Oh come to God! and on that last day you shall meet him with joy.

Chapter VI.

The end of the Drunkard.

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

When we see the loathsome, bloated, and almost putrid form of the confirmed drunkard, we cannot but feel disgust and horror mingled with the pity with which we view what was once a man. And yet, before we allow ourselves to despise the degraded object, or to draw back with the feeling that we are holier than he is, it would be well to consider how far the difference is produced by our own unassisted steadfastness, and how far it may have been caused, not only by unmerited grace bestowed upon us, but sometimes by merely providential circumstances, while ourselves were perfectly off our guard, or, perhaps, taking the first steps which would lead us to the end that now so justly fills us with loathing. I make not these remarks to extenuate the crime of drunkenness; those who fall into it, must reap the bitter fruits of disgrace and misery in this

world, and, unless a miracle of grace prevent, must through eternity suffer an infinite increase of contempt and wretchedness. Each one, who for the first time allows himself the indulgence of any intoxicating drink, is taking the most important step in that course which leads to wretchedness and woe. And many have taken this step, and would have gone on in this course, had not a merciful Providence interposed, without their assistance and contrary to their wishes, to arrest their progress. Among many such instances, I take the following as an example.

Many years since, a youth in going a journey stopped at a tavern. Probably from a desire to make display, he called upon the bar-keeper to prepare one of those compounds by which ardent spirit is disguised, so as to prevent its being disgusting to such as are uninitiated in the mysteries of drinking. His mixture being ready, he invited his fellow-travellers to partake with him. Each had provided himself with his sling, or his toddy, or black strap, or punch, according to his taste, and, therefore, all declined the treat. Every one, however, allowed that it was a pity so much good liquor should be lost; the youngster thought so too, and, to save it, drank the whole himself. And as it turned

out, it was one of the happiest things that he ever did, though he intended it not. He had hitherto been entirely unaccustomed to any stimulating drink, and the consequence of taking so large a quantity at once, was, that he was made both sick and drunk. His companions continued their journey, but were obliged to leave him behind. The good people of the house where they left him, were afraid that he would die, and, on the recommendation of a passing stranger, they collected every filthy liquid which the premises afforded, and forced it down his throat to cause him to throw up the spirit which he had drank. Falstaff's compound of villanous smells must have been a delicate treat to his nose, compared with what this must have been to the palate of the helpless youth. But they had the desired effect, and, after a violent effort, nature found relief from the still viler liquor with which his stomach had been drenched, and which would have been no less nauseous to his unvitiated palate, had it not been so disguised by the art of the tapster, as to have its natural taste completely concealed. The next day he continued his journey; but the discipline he had gone through had made an impression upon his feelings, which did not speedily wear off, and for

which he had cause to be thankful as long as he lived. It is thus that a good God, when we least wish it, is sometimes showing us mercy, by over-ruling the perverseness of our own actions, and doing us good where we had intended to do only evil.

Without this kind Providence to hedge up our path, and be a restraint upon our disposition to sinful actions, I fear there would be few who might not be ranked with the poor drunkard we are so apt to despise, or with the blasphemer, the sabbath-breaker, the infidel, and even with the murderer. Where is the Christian that will not allow, that to God's mercy alone, he owes it that he is what he is? Can any look back and say, that it has not often been providential circumstances, rather than his own caution or resolution, by which he has been preserved at times from the grossest sins? I believe there are few, if any, even among true Christians, who would not find by looking back, some time, in their own experience, when they have been saved from the most humiliating falls, not by their own watchfulness, nor by the power of grace upon their hearts, but, as far as they can discern, their preservation has been the effect of circumstances which they could not have expected, and

over which they could have no control. In view of their deliverance they must rejoice ; but, remembering their own weakness, it will be with fear and trembling ; not forgetting God's distinguishing mercy, they will rejoice with thankfulness.

But I have not done with my story yet. In progress of time, the boy becomes a man ; after a number of years have passed, we find him a wanderer upon the deep. He is now in the very focus of temptation. His shipmates all have their happiness placed upon their grog. If it was to confer every possible blessing, it could not be lauded more, nor sought after more eagerly. Your real sea-dog will give his eye-teeth for a glass of grog ; it is a fact, that many a tooth has been drawn in exchange for rum. All their praise and all their eagerness had no effect upon this young man ; and their ridicule was equally lost upon him. He had taken a notion that spirit could do harm, but no good ; and the opinion was so strongly fixed in his mind, that without any very strong moral principle to back it, he was enabled to resist every temptation to drink, or, more properly, he was free from any temptation. Whenever the weather was wet or cold, the crew were allowed an extra glass of grog to warm them, and

when the weather was hot, they had the same to cool them; if they labored more than common, it was given to stimulate their industry; if they were allowed an holiday, it was given to cheer their idleness. Surely that must have been a fiend, and a very ingenious fiend, who originated the idea of such a substance, and contrived to persuade men to consider it a specific for all evils, under every contradiction of circumstance. But, however that may be, this young man had escaped the delusion, and steadily avoided the pernicious drug.

If we follow him a little further, we shall find him a prisoner, and confined on board of a hulk in an East-Indian port. The climate is sultry, and the air loaded with unhealthy vapors, and these, together with the depression arising from confinement, soon wear away his strength. To preserve their health, the prisoners were allowed to pull in the boats, and among others, he was taken one day to pull an officer on shore. His oar when he raised it felt very heavy, and he was glad to get it into the row-lock. He wondered the others could row so easy; he moved his oar, indeed, when they moved theirs, but he could put no strength upon it, and had all pulled like him, the boat must have remained at rest. When they arrived

on shore, the prisoners went to a public house, to wait till they should be wanted, and there he saw his companions enjoying themselves, while he felt depressed and unhappy. They were exciting their spirits by drinking gin, and in hopes to overcome the prostration of his own, he determined to take a glass with them. He was thus, from the temptation of the evil one, or by the suggestions of his own depraved heart, prepared to make another beginning in that sin from which he had hitherto been so providentially preserved. Had the spirit operated as he expected, the relief from his depression would, probably, have induced him to have recourse to the same remedy; and he would have been led on, from time to time, to take more and more, till at last he would have become, like other sailors, a complete sot. But here again the Almighty ordered things, contrary to his wishes, and thus, saved him from destruction—saved him from the pit that was then yawning to receive him. The liquor he thus took, in contradiction to its usual effect, instead of raising his spirits, only prostrated his little remaining strength. He was reduced for a time to utter helplessness: he had a perfect consciousness of all that was going on about him, could hear all that was said, see every thing

that was done, but could neither speak nor move. His companions were now at a loss what do with him : leave him on shore they could not, and they were unwilling that one of their number should appear to have abused the liberty he had been allowed, and thus abridge their own. At last they laid him in the bottom of the boat, and spreading a sail over him and placing their feet upon him, pulled off to the ship. When the officers had gone on board, he was smuggled into one of the ports, and from thenceforth, he went no more on shore, and carefully avoided all spirituous liquors. His youth had at first caused him to suffer more from the climate than did his companions, whose constitutions were more hardened, but in the end it proved much less fatal to him. He saw one and another taken off by the fevers of the country, and had occasion to remark, that those who drank the most, were attacked the first. Now, had not this young man reason to believe in an overruling Providence ? and if God granted to him the richer blessings of his grace, will it not through a happy eternity be an abundant cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving, that circumstances ordered by that Providence, prevented him, when of himself he was ready to plunge into a vice, which, though it

would not have shut against him the doors of mercy, would eminently have unfitted him for seeking to enter them. If, at last, he finds himself among the company of the redeemed, must he not forever delight in praising the mercy of that God, who protected him in the hour of danger as well as the love of that Savior, who ransomed his soul when it was in bondage to sin? If some, then, owe their preservation so much to events which only influenced their outward conduct, while they produced no effect upon their hearts, may not others say that the bad habits into which they have fallen, were not so much their own fault, since to them there was no such constraining Providence? If they had never experienced any such, it could be no palliation of their sins; for God is under no more obligation to restrain us by the events of his providence, from falling into vices to which our depraved nature would lead us, than he is to grant us the influences of his Holy Spirit, to constrain us to seek for mercy and grace, by which we may be delivered from the dominion, and saved from the consequences of those sins, to which our hearts are so much disposed to cling. But at the last great day will it be found that any have been without the influences of that Spirit? Surely none such

will appear before the judgment-seat; and as surely do I believe that though there will be all the generations of men, none will be there who have not experienced the restraining hand of God in his providences, although both mercies have been resisted, alike, by the stubbornness of their own evil hearts. All drunkards and every other evil doer, will then find that they have the blame to bear themselves for all the vices of which they have been guilty; and since the blessings of providence and grace were not withheld from them, they will only serve to aggravate their guilt. They will find, then, as their naked souls stand before God, that the sin has been their own; and as the suffering has been theirs in this world, so will the aggravated torments of the world to come be theirs, and theirs only.

But if the miseries entailed by the drunkard upon himself and upon his family are so great, as every one must see that they are in this life, and the word of God tells us that they will be infinitely increased in the life which is to come, that their sufferings will be infinite as to intensity, and lasting as eternity; if these things are so, should not the Christian's heart yearn over the poor victims of this vice. Should he despise the poor object of his pity, or boast himself above him, as if himself stood by his own strength? Will he not the rather, feeling

his own weakness, be humble, and while he is thankful to God, who has alone made him to differ, will he not do all he can to help, succor and relieve his miserable, offending fellow-creature? With this view, and in the hope that it may be a warning to some one youth, who has as yet been free from this vice, or that it may assist to arrest the steps of some who are making progress in it, I will give the following narrative, showing some of the evil consequences which attend the crime of drunkenness I would observe that I was myself eye-witness of the facts related, and have selected this for no particular reason in preference to hundreds of others, which I could give, and which would be equally applicable.

John P——, or Jack, as he was familiarly called by his shipmates, was a native of Marblehead, in the State of Massachusetts, and at the time that I became acquainted with him, was about twenty-seven years of age. He was sent to the Grand Bank to catch fish, as he himself said, as soon as he was strong enough to haul a brick by a string into the garret window, that being the rule by which, according to the ancient customs of that town, judgment was formed of every boy's ability to draw in cod-fish. When I knew him, Jack was as fine a

specimen of a sailor as I have ever met with, both in appearance and character: but I would here remark, that I have never known a Christian sailor; when I shall have that privilege, I shall expect to see one of the most warm-hearted of Christians, as a sailor is the most warm-hearted of men. Jack was about six feet in height, and thoroughly well proportioned; he did not go upon a pair of spindles, like many who have passed their days upon the water, but was well sparred below as well as aloft; and though he had broad shoulders and a full expanded chest, there was not that excessive development above which, in many seamen, almost amounts to deformity. His person was erect and his carriage graceful; he had a pleasant expression of countenance, which was finely set off by a bold, but laughing black eye; and he had an archness and playfulness in his manners, which was almost feminine, but which never did away the impression of the manhood of his character. When in a state of rest, his limbs seemed to hang peculiarly loose upon him, but they were supplied with a mass of muscle, by which they could be braced to the greatest efforts, and he was one of the strongest, and also one of the most active among a crew of twenty picked men. His mind was strong

and independent, but uncultivated; and the qualities of his heart like those of his mind, had only wanted the direction of right education, to bring forth the most valuable fruits. Altogether I have never seen a finer specimen of the creature man, either in mental, moral, or physical qualities, than was presented by Jack P——.

He was not free from the vices to which sailors are prone; but in his indulgences, for one of that variety of the human species, he exhibited an uncommon degree of moderation and self-command.

He had a shipmate by the name of Ezekiel, who came from an inland part of the country, and had been but one or two voyages to sea. Ezekiel was a very clever fellow, and one of your sober-looking, humorous dogs, who, with a great deal of wit, always brought it out in the best possible manner. As Jack loved to laugh, they became close companions, and, after a while, from congeniality of spirit, very intimate friends. When they had returned from their last voyage, they had agreed that for the next they would still continue together, and in looking around the wharves, they selected a ship bound to the North-west coast of America, as the one on board of which they should like to enter. As Jack was looking

round, the captain's eye fell upon him, and he at once put him down for one of his crew. Ezekiel he did not care so much about, for he had not yet acquired the look of a sea-dog, and the captain was resolved to have picked men. Jack would not ship without his companion, and, rather than lose him, the captain said he would take his friend, but he could not give him seamen's wages. Ezekiel knew that he was not a seaman, and therefore did not expect it, but, as the voyage was to last three or four years, he thought his wages should be little less, as he would know as much as any one long before the vessel returned. The seamen were to have twelve dollars a month, and, of course, Jack could get that; but the captain would give Ezekiel no more than ten, and as he would not ship for less than eleven, he determined not to go. In the mean time, Jack had enrolled his name among the crew at twelve, but rather than part with his old comrade, he told the captain that he might reduce his wages to eleven dollars, if he would give Ezekiel the same, and on these terms they were shipped together. I mention this little anecdote, merely as a specimen of the disinterestedness of Jack's character, a trait which he possessed in a very eminent degree.

It was on board the ship I have mentioned, that I became first acquainted with Jack. I was then a boy, and going out as clerk in the same vessel. It was on the evening before she sailed that I went on board. The ship was then lying in the stream, and the crew had just hove short her anchor, ready to weigh early the next morning. When I went into the forecastle, I found Jack seated with the rest of the crew. He was sitting directly in front of the ladder, and was the one with whom I first came in contact. I felt somewhat doubtful of the reception I should meet with among a class of men, with which I was perfectly unacquainted, who were proverbial for the roughness of their character, and of whom I felt somewhat afraid. I did not know how they would like my intruding into their den, for a den the forecastle appeared to be, being but dimly lighted, and scarce large enough to contain the chests with which the floor was covered. My first look at Jack did not altogether put me at my ease. He was in his working dress, which consisted chiefly of a pair of canvass trowsers pretty well daubed with tar; these were short-waisted and buttoned tight about the hips, by which they were kept up without suspenders; and besides these, he had

on a red flannel shirt, with the sleeves rolled up to the armpits, by which he displayed the whole of his long brawny arms, which looked as if he could toss me as he would a kitten, through the scuttle, in case he should take dudgeon at my intrusion. His large whiskers, which met under his chin, gave an outlandish look to his face, which was distorted by a huge quid of tobacco that he had on one side.

He was probably amused at the contrast between my delicate complexion and my sailor habiliments, for he turned his face towards Ezekiel, who was sitting on one side of the forecastle, while he looked from his eyes obliquely upon me, at the same time rolling his quid to the other side of his face; and altogether, he put on such a comical look, that I could scarcely help laughing in his face. He was employed greasing his hands to prevent their cracking, to which the hands of sailors are much subject in winter time, when working in the wet; and when I reached the bottom of the ladder he flung out one of them for me to shake, with a force which, if it had hit me, would have knocked me over. I shook his greasy fist, and Jack and I soon became great friends; and I found him a really kind-hearted, good-tempered fellow, and a very pleasant companion, full

of his own stories and jokes, and very glad of a chance to laugh. He was too good-natured to be quarrelsome himself, and he would never allow the other seamen to impose upon the green hands, which some were disposed to do; and, reckless as they were, most of them had too much respect for Jack's fist ever to attempt it.

When topsails were to be reefed, Jack was always the first aloft, and if any one was in the rigging before him, he was sure to get over his competitor some how or other, though at the risk of his neck, to secure his place at the weather ear-ring. And so, when any game was going forward, Jack was still foremost: sailors love to play, and Jack was as frolicksome as a school-boy. If a school of porpoises, of albercores, or bonetas appeared about the ship, Jack was in an instant upon the spritsail yard with his ready harpoon, and his sure aim was certain to provide a feast of fresh fish for his shipmates. Being so active in duty made him a favorite with the officers, and his readiness for a frolic pleased his companions, and his kind feelings and good nature caused him to be loved by all.

He had, however, a rival in the ship. Not that there was any feelings of unkindness between them, but being nearly matched in activ-

ity and strength, whenever they were together on ship's duty each strove to be foremost. As Jack was the leader of the starboard watch, so was Peter of the larboard. They were from the same town. Peter was the oldest man, was somewhat shorter and thicker than Jack, and he was thought to be a more complete seaman, but was not so active a man. It would have been difficult for the officers to have made a choice between them.

One morning, as the ship was laying in the Bay of Nooahewah, at the Washington Isles, the crew were called to bend the mainsail. Peter, probably by mistake, had gone up the starboard rigging, and was about half way up, when Jack perceived him, and, thinking he was infringing upon his own rights, hastened after. He overtook Peter just as he was going out upon the yard. Peter occupied the spar, so that he could not be passed except by jumping over him, and this Jack did not hesitate to do ; he leaped from the rigging, and came down upon his breast and hands on the yard outside of his rival. There was neither sail nor jack-stay upon the yard, by which he might hold, and there had been a slight shower during the night, by which the yard was made as slippery as if it had been greased; consequently, Jack found he could

not cling to it. His hands slipped, and he fell over back, and came down with his head first.

He had fallen about half the distance of the deck when he came within reach of a rope, and he would have saved himself, but that his body in turning twisted his wrist out of joint, and he had no longer power to hold, and fell to the deck. The check to the fall saved his life, and he escaped besides his wrist, with only breaking two or three of his ribs. His shipmates ran to his assistance; he was taken up, carried below and bled; and all hands, from the captain to the cook, seemed to vie with each other, to see who should nurse him with the most kindness, during the confinement which followed. Had each been a brother, he could not have been treated with more tenderness, and all seemed to grow more and more attached to him.

In a few weeks he was as active in duty, and as sound in body as ever, except that his wrist had become somewhat enlarged from being badly set, and nothing more occurred of consequence, that I recollect, until the ship arrived at the Sandwich Islands some months after this.

At the island of Hawaiee the king was residing, and with him were a parcel of Americans and Europeans, captains of ships and

others, who, with the king and his chiefs, spent most of their time in drinking and noisy mirth, or in sleeping off the effects of their debauchery.

After the ship had lain there for some days, her captain determined to pay his majesty the compliment of giving an entertainment to him and his suit of drunkards. Awnings were spread, and tables under them the whole length of the decks; and while the motley company were partaking of the feast and getting themselves drunk, the whole crew were employed in attending upon them.

The officers sat with the company, and, like them, had generally become pretty thoroughly intoxicated, and the jack tars, in passing the choice New England to the noble guests, would not, of course, lose the opportunity of tickling their own palates by a taste of the nectar. Consequently, though none were helplessly drunk, all had made themselves drunk enough for mischief. After dinner, the captain and mate escorted his majesty to the shore, and scarce had they left the ship, when the second mate, who had been on board but a few weeks, and who was but little respected by the crew, began to get into difficulty with one of the seamen. He collared him to force him to do as he

wished; the man resisted, and the officer being but a small man, was soon put down. Seeing their friend overpowered, some of his guests came to his assistance. This brought the crew to the help of their comrade, and a general battle ensued. The mate's party, however, was the most numerous; they began to get the advantage, and the sailors were driven forward to the forecastle.

While this was doing, Jack was below, but hearing the noise he sprang upon the deck, and seeing his shipmates overpowered by strangers, he began to think it was time to bring in his own fist as a make-weight. He was, like the rest, heated with liquor, and therefore took no time to consider, but immediately rushed into the battle, striking to the right and left. Wherever his hand fell, one of the enemy fell beneath it, and disappeared to be trampled under foot by the crowd. This reinforcement turned the tide of the battle, which now flowed aft till one party sought refuge in the cabin.

I was then sick, being upon a hammock in the steerage. I had heard the trampling upon deck, the rushing forward and aft, and, occasionally, a heavy fall as one of the combatants was knocked down. When the mate and his party had retired to the cabin, the seamen had gone

forward, and for a while all was silent. Presently, footsteps were heard again on the deck over my head, and, in a few moments, I could see gleaming down the fore-hatch the light of several flashes, followed by the report of pistols.

The second mate had gone into the cabin to get arms, and had now gone forward again with his party, provided with pistols and cutlasses. Jack and his companions, what with liquor and what with the excitement of the contest, had become quite furious. When he saw them cutting at his shipmates with their cutlasses, he jumped down the forecastle companion-way, and seizing a sword belonging to one of the crew, he leaped upon deck again, and with the fury of a fiend rushed to the attack. Not one of his foes, however, saw fit to wait for him, and having chased them into the cabin, he came with his drawn sword into the steerage where I was lying. I had never seen a man so excited; his laugh of exultation, as he spoke of the affray, was really fearful. I tried to persuade him to give up his sword, and had apparently succeeded, when the uproar was again renewed, and he rushed upon deck. The second mate had again come up with his company, having ground their cutlasses which they had found were too dull to cut.

One of the guests, more sober, or more thoughtful than the rest, had gone on shore for the captain and mate, and just as the contest was commencing again, the latter made his appearance. He was a man who avoided the use of spirit, and always maintained the command over himself; consequently, he retained his influence over others. His authority soon quelled the tumult. He stepped in unarmed between the combatants, ordered one party into the forecastle and the other to the cabin. His commands were obeyed, and he alone retained possession of the deck.

And what was the consequence of this foolish frolic? Some of the crew were turned on shore with the loss of all their wages, and others were punished in other ways; but Jack had offended too seriously to be let off thus lightly, and he was kept in confinement to be tried for his life by his country's laws. Here we see a man who was one day loved and valued by those under whom he served, and the next, put in irons by the same men, that they might carry him home to his native land to be hung; for that would almost certainly have been his fate, had he been tried in a court of justice; and he only escaped it by his shipmates', after he had

been a prisoner for months, conniving at his escape. And when he left the ship, he left all he was worth of worldly goods behind him, and lost the hard earnings of a life of toil.

Such an instance as this, one would think, should be enough to make any youth cautious how he allowed one drop of an intoxicating liquor to pass his lips. Jack, though a sailor, was not recklessly intemperate. Few men who allow themselves indulgence, possess more command of themselves than he did; but what he drank was sufficient, with other exciting causes, to change him for a while, from the kind-hearted, good-tempered fellow, which he usually was, to the appearance of a demon thirsting for blood. And this change, short as it was, was sufficient to ruin all his earthly prospects. He lost all that he had been laboring for, for years; he lost all hopes of advancement; he lost his character, and was at last glad to get on shore, to live among a set of vagabond runaways, who were the very offscouring of the world. I believe Jack had a mother then living. How must a mother have loved such a son! Think what must have been the feelings of the poor widow, as she looked for his return! He has been gone for years, and she has not heard of him, but she trusts that he is safe, and at length

hears that his ship has arrived; and she hastens to inquire for her son; but she is told that he has not come; that he was left among the most profligate and abandoned of men; and for her comfort, she is further told, it is better for her that it is so, for if he had come home, he would have come with fetters upon his limbs, to die an ignominious death. Has any one a mother, and is he ready to say, that he is willing to thrust such a sword through her heart? If he is, let him go on and drink. Such a man was made for a drunkard; for with such a soul, it is but little that even that beastly vice can degrade him.

But all these are temporal evils only, and, for temporal evils, light as compared with the misery which the drunkard often brings upon himself, and upon his friends. But who that believes that he has a soul which is to live forever—who that believes he is of more value than a beast, and that when he dies, there will be any part of him worth more than the carcass of a dead dog—but must feel an interest in the future welfare of that soul, of that part which he has the surest evidence will be happy or miserable everlastingly, and the happiness and misery of which is of more consequence to him, than the worth of many worlds, could he possess them all? And who would throw away the happiness, and take the

misery for his portion, for the pleasure of getting drunk? For what? For the privilege of being despised and avoided as a nuisance, of being ranked below the brutes! Who, that has read his Bible, does not know that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God? and who that has seen him in his cups, but will acknowledge that he is totally unfitted for it—that his presence can but pollute the residence of holy beings, dwelling before a pure God? And who, at the present day, does not know that the drunkard is formed from the moderate drinker, and the moderate drinker is made by beginning to sip a little, perhaps a thimble-full at first; just as a man grows from the boy, and the boy from the babe? And in one case the steps are about as well defined, and the result is almost as certain, as in the other.

What became of Jack after he left the ship, I could never hear; but the probability is, that he has gone to his account long ere this, and how little chance was there that he would be prepared by repentance to meet his God? Did you ever have a friend, who has died unrepentant, and who, of course, you could not but believe has been damned? In the still hours of the night, have your wandering thoughts ever followed that friend into the eternity where he has

gone; and has not your mind shuddered, and your heart bled, to think of the agony to which his tortured soul is now subject? Are you ready to follow that friend, and partake of his lot, notwithstanding Christ has died to save you, and you can have happiness free of cost, if you will accept it? And, reader, will you not accept it? You dare not say you will not, though you may put it off; you may delay while your foot is on the edge of a precipice, and another step will plunge you into the burning gulf of perdition. And if you would not disincline your heart to the offers of mercy, if you would not unfit yourself to receive them, keep clear of this vice of drunkenness; tamper not with temptation to it; and oh! watch over those who are under your influence, that they do not prepare themselves for that place of torment. Watch them, if in case you are called to part with, you would avoid the misery of knowing that they are in hell, and that you have placed them there.

Would you wish to know what agony is there endured? Read your Bible! What stronger figures could be used to express everlasting torment? Our finite capacities cannot take in the full extent, any more than the duration of that misery; but would you see the nearest ap

proach which the shadows of this world can make to the realities of the next, then look at the drunkard, or at a company of drunkards after their debauch. Their mouths are parched with thirst which water cannot allay, a fit type of that burning thirst which Dives was suffering in hell, when he prayed for a drop of water to cool his tongue; when, if the water had been allowed, it would but have passed off in scalding vapor without relieving his torment. This state the sailors express, by saying that a man's coppers are hot; and the bright glow of the red metal, over a furnace, very fitly expresses the intensity of that fever in the mouth and throat, which the intemperate man feels, when the excitement of intoxication has subsided. Then, too, the nervous system is prostrated, and unfitted to endure any pain; so prostrate, indeed, as to produce delirium, as is well known. And what a delirium is it? not accompanied with insensibility, or unconsciousness; but with an acute perception of pain, with a distinct feeling of identity, and a knowledge of what is passing around, it is attended with an excited imagination, fertile in conjuring up forms of terror, and prolific in anticipations of future evil. This state of suffering is sometimes called, by those who have endured it, the horrors. Every one who

has seen a human being during a fit of this delirium, will allow that it is very justly named, and it is a very proper emblem of that horror of horrors which is prepared for drunkards, and all unrepentant sinners in the eternal world.

It is probable that many of my readers may never have witnessed a fit of the horrors. If so, they can have no idea of the wretchedness which is then endured, nor of the pain caused even by witnessing it. I will relate, as near as I can recollect, the circumstances of a case as related to me by a physician, who attended the sufferer. The patient was brought into the hospital, and his medical attendants found him in the agony of an imagination excited by intoxication to a state of delirium, which caused him to thrash himself about upon his bed, regardless of a broken leg. He was roaring out from the anguish of his mind, as well as from the pain of his fractured and twisted limb. They held him down, and the bone was set and bound up, but scarce had the surgeon completed the operation, when he sprang out of bed, and began to rush frantically about the room. The splinters, in a measure, supported the limb, but it was necessary to reset the bones. He was placed in a bed, and the bandages were

taken off; but no sooner were they removed, than he made another desperate spring, and began to stump about upon the broken limb, nor could he be secured, until he had thrust the bone completely through the flesh and skin.

But what was the fury of this man to the frantic agony every sinner must endure under the insufferable torments of eternity? There, it will be a pleasure to tear his own flesh, as a relief from the gnawings of the never-dying worm; but there will he find not even such relief. Though he may tear his flesh, as he will gnash his teeth for anguish, he cannot mitigate, but only add to his sufferings. He may rage, but his fury will but increase his pain, as the pain will also add to his phrensy.

But there is another motive, which might be urged for the avoidance of this vice, besides the selfish fear of consequences. Prone to evil as human nature is, I trust, and I believe, it is not fallen so low, as to be acted upon by no higher principle. There is scarce an human being so degraded, as not to feel contempt for him who is wanting in gratitude. La Fayette, when he was in America, paid the debts of an old revolutionary soldier, and thus released him from prison. What would have been thought of that man, if he had come forth into

the world, and every day cast reproach upon his benefactor? Would not the whole country have execrated him for his ingratitude? If a son is sick, and his father, nursing him day and night, saves him from death, but, by his attentions to his son, destroys his own life, would not that son be ranked among the most ungrateful of men, if he was to continue in a course of life which he knew would have grieved his father, even though his father was past the power of knowing it?

Now, Jesus has paid our debts, paid them with his own blood, and we may be free if we will. We have been sick, and he has taken our sickness and borne it for us. He has died, that we might live. And can we be so ungrateful as to give him pain, by continuing a life of sin? Can we be willing to reproach him by the practice of vice, while living under the dispensation of his gospel? We cast reproach upon him by the guilt of intemperance. If to us, in our imperfect state, this vice appears so odious, and its effects produce so much disgust, how must it appear to a pure and spotless being? We grieve his Holy Spirit when we tamper with this vice; for, has he not commanded us to resist temptation, to avoid it, to pray that we be not led into it?

Now, reader, are you willing to be thought ungrateful? Can you read of the reproach your Savior meekly endured, of his agony and death, and, knowing that all this he suffered to save you from your sins—can you go on in this, or in any other vice, when every sin you have committed, or shall commit, has added a pang to that Savior's sufferings, those sufferings, the anticipation of which, produced such anguish, as to cause him to sweat great drops of blood?

Chapter VII.

On the Danger of Idle Habits.

"He must watch against a dozing away of time; the clock-weight goes down slowly, yet it draws all the works with it."—Cecil.

There is no vice, no crime, against the approach of which, every person, and especially every young person, should more sedulously keep a guard, than he should against the beginnings of a disposition to idleness. It is the stepping-stone, in a large proportion, and very probably in the majority of cases, to every species of wickedness which brings disgrace, or

entails misery upon mankind. There is nothing more true, than, that while others require to be shown a bait, the idler bites the naked hook. The mind of man is much too active in its nature to be satisfied in doing nothing; consequently, when it has no other occupation, it will be brooding upon mischief; when a person remains idle without falling into vice, it must be that his mind is feeble and inert, or else, that his physical energies have been paralysed by disease.

Though a character for idleness does not immediately stamp an individual with crime, it will yet make every one suspicious of him. There is a general feeling of distrust connected, and very rightly connected, with the word, which, though it defines nothing, conveys an indistinct idea of all that is bad. What can establish a worse character for a place, than the opinion, that it is full of idlers? When does a female so much fear an insult, as when she passes a squad of idlers? Where does the gambler, the drunkard, or the libertine instinctively look for associates, if not in such a squad?

And yet, wherever you see such a congregation, there are, probably, among them, some as free from vice, as any individuals in the com-

munity. A young man has stopped among them, perhaps, for the first time, from having a leisure moment he does not know how to occupy; but he has thereby taken a step which may influence his destiny in time, and give a coloring to his fate through eternity. He sees nothing to make him distrustful, and, finding amusement, he stops again and again, each time becoming fonder of the society he meets. He does not intend to allow his visits to encroach upon the hours appropriated to business; but insensibly they do, and his character is gone, before he suspected it to be in danger. He does not plunge, directly, into any vice; but he is ensnared in so plausible a manner, and led on by such slow degrees, that he is hardly aware that he has made any progress in wickedness, even after he has given himself up to it.

In one of our seaport towns resided a young man of good talents, and respectable connections. He was studying a profession, and in passing from his father's house to the office of his teacher, a distance of about two miles, he was obliged to pass, or always did pass, where usually were congregated a company of careless, dissipated young men. Some of them always had a merry tale to tell, and he not un-

frequently would stop to listen, and sometimes take part in the conversation.

At these times it often happened that he was called upon to help to finish a bottle of wine, or make way with a bowl of punch. Of course, he could do no less than return the compliment occasionally by a like treat; and it soon became an established custom with him, to stop each day, on his way to the office. As he loitered longer and longer, his studies soon came almost to a stand, while his education in the school of vice continued to progress with still increasing rapidity. The seminary in which he was now learning, was well provided with its appropriate instructors, and suitable apparatus, in all its departments. The drunkards had the bar-room and cellar; the gamblers had their billiard-table, and other conveniences, suitable to initiating novices; and the jockeys had the stable; and though none acquainted with the mysteries of the place, wholly confined themselves to one department, yet were there in each, amateurs, whose business and delight it was to guide the learners, and to entrap the unwary.

Among such accomplished professors, our student could not but make rapid progress in the various arts of vice; and, as his father was known to be rich, he was considered a valuable

acquisition to the society he had chosen, and was flattered accordingly. But, though rich, the father was not disposed to make the son a very large allowance ; and, in consequence, although he continued to get along for some time, he was always in debt, and distressed for money. At length, he fell in with a stranger who had stopped at the tavern, with whom he soon became very intimate. His new acquaintance was but a year or two older than himself: he was a short, thick-set, rather corpulent young man, with free manners, and a frank, but somewhat bloated countenance. His appearance marked his character. He was what his companions would have called a jolly, free-hearted, clever fellow. He was one of those who, as the world say, are nobody's enemy but their own: but in this case, as in all similar, the world speaks falsely, for this young man hastened the ruin of his new friend. It is true, he was his own enemy, for he early brought himself to a drunkard's grave, after squandering a large fortune, and living for a time in poverty ; and it is equally true, that he was the enemy of all within the influence of his example.

Being rich, the stranger had abundance of money at command, and lavished it freely

But with his new acquaintance it was not so plenty, though he felt bound in honor, notwithstanding the scarcity, to keep pace with his friend in all his expenses. He, no doubt, thought his father very niggardly in keeping him so short of money, and it is not improbable, that, at last, he argued himself into a belief that, his parent was doing him an injustice, in withholding from his use, what, he thought, must one day be his own. He was tempted to take, what he could not otherwise obtain, and of course, his father soon lost all confidence in him, and, thenceforth, would allow him nothing beyond his clothing and his daily food. But, though the means of dissipation were thus cut off, his evil habits could not be eradicated. He had become irreclaimably idle and dissolute, and, after remaining for some years a drone and a disgrace in his father's house, the affections of all his friends became alienated, and they were not long in finding a way to be rid of him. He died at a distance from his home, and without a kind relative to close his eyes, and he died such a death, as the dissolute spendthrift commonly dies.

There is not a year passes, in which thousands are not thus entrapped, and led to ruin, who, but a little before, would have detested

the vices into which they have fallen, and whose first step was an hour of idleness, spent, as they thought, innocently, in a place where they could see no signs of danger. There is scarcely a tavern in the country, and especially, if it be a rum-selling tavern, which has not, in this way, been a stumbling-block in the way of some of our most hopeful youth. There is not a theatre in any of our cities, however it may be lauded as the school of refinement, and the promoter of good morals, which does not prepare its yearly quota of drunkards, and gamblers, and other dissolutes, from those who thought it an harmless amusement for a leisure evening, and who, when they began to frequent it, were free from vice.

These, and other resorts for idlers, are constantly changing the honest and industrious into the idle and dissolute. Could the community see embodied, on one side, all the hopes which have been blasted, the usefulness which has been prevented, all the happiness which has been destroyed, and all the souls which have been ruined, by these traps to the unwary, in one single year; and, on the other hand, could they find, made apparent to their senses, all the dissoluteness and vice, which these have occasioned, with the consequent detriment to

the community, and the individual suffering and misery, which they have caused,—the public would rise in their indignation, and banish such pests from the land.

But it is not only in public, that the idler is exposed to evil. Man cannot be so solitary, as to shut himself up from his own wicked thoughts; and, till he can do that, his enemy will find him out with his temptations. Wherever he may be, or however situated, no one, then, can be too watchful against the first encroachments of this vice. Many have become hopelessly idle, who thought, at first, to allow themselves but a few days, or a few weeks of leisure. When the habit has once been commenced, unless something rouse him, an individual may go on from week to week, and from month to month, till he feels totally unfitted for any thing useful, and, in an equal degree, prepared for any evil impression. If such are the results, how can we be too cautious to guard against this vice?

A vice most certainly it is, although of so negative a quality, as not to excite the same alarm at its approach, as do many others to which it almost certainly leads. It is not the less, but the more to be guarded against on that account; for I think every one must allow, that

in proportion as it is insidious, in the same proportion it must be dangerous. There is no age at which it may not make its approaches—no period of life, in which it is not attended with injury, if not with ruin. In youth, undoubtedly, the danger is greatest, because the passions and powers have then become developed, and possess the vigor of novelty, while there is no corresponding experience to check their redundancy. But the school-boy may be forming habits, which will never leave him; the man, in the full vigor of middle age, having lost the freshness of his early hopes, and, perhaps, disgusted with the world, may then find it a snare; and, when the vigor of manhood is passed, and old age is creeping on, then, when the blood begins to flow sluggishly in the veins, the spirits become inert, and the man is more than ever tempted to yield to sloth, which may shorten and make wretched the small remainder of his days. And as there is no age, so also is there no condition in life, in which a man is not exposed to the snares of idleness.

Whenever a man's lot is cast in the world, industry and sloth, like every other virtue and every other vice, are attended with their appropriate rewards and punishments; and that, not only in regard to the pains and pleasures

of this world, but also by their influence in hedging up, or in making easy the preparation for another. I have shown how the son of the rich man became ensnared. I will now endeavor to place in such contrast, as may prove instructive, the different fate of two young men, whose childhood was passed under other circumstances, who started in life with nearly equal prospects, though their course was marked with very different results. I think that their history will show, how important it is to guard against the first allurements to idle habits, and upon how small a point, the happiness of a man may turn.

Joseph L—— was the eldest son of a respectable farmer in the State of New Hampshire. His early youth was passed industriously, laboring on his father's farm, while, after the habits of the country, a portion of the winter leisure was allotted to attaining the rudiments of education, in the district school. In this way he had learned to read and write tolerably well, and acquired a little knowledge of arithmetic before he was eighteen years of age, while, at the same time, he had established habits of industry, and gained strength to labor. When he had nearly completed his eighteenth year, his father told him, that the rest of his time,

till he was twenty-one, he was willing to give him to labor for himself; and this was all that he could ever give him, having no property except his farm, and having a numerous family to support. Joseph was very glad to be allowed the profits of his own labor, which he had always considered belonged by right to his father. In three years he should be able to earn several hundred dollars, and that, in his eyes, was a great fortune. Every year young men were returning from the seacoast, with their pockets well lined with cash, and many marvellous stories did they tell of that distant land, exciting in the youth who heard them, a longing desire to begin their own adventures. Joseph was impatient for the spring to open, that he might start to seek his fortune in the much talked of El Dorada. The spring at last came, and though the part of the country where he resided, was yet covered deep with snow, it was well known, that on the seaboard the ground was open, and the farmers had already begun to plant. Joseph was ready to go with the first party who began their march. His mother had long been making preparation, but with a heavy heart, for the expected separation; her own hands had carded and spun the wool, had wove, dyed and fulled the cloth, and, final-

ly, had cut out, and made up the suit which was to be carried in the pack, and to be kept as Sunday clothes. The stockings were of her own knitting, and every other article of apparel was of her own make, with the exception, only, of the hat and shoes. As she made up the bundle, she did not forget to deposit there a small Bible, which she had procured for the special purpose, begging her boy, were it only for his mother's sake, that he would not neglect it. His father could have given his board for a month, or a year, without inconvenience, but could with difficulty scrape together cash enough to carry him to the sea-coast, although he was to walk the whole distance, and live sparingly by the way. Joseph was a well-grown, bright-looking boy, and, therefore, found no difficulty in letting himself to work for the season upon a farm, and he was to have eight dollars a month, a rate of wages beyond his most sanguine expectations. He worked eight months, and put the sixty-four dollars into his pocket to return home, undiminished by the expenditure of a single cent. Many were returning to the same part of the country, some taking the stage, and some going on foot. Joseph joined himself to the pedestrians, in order to save his money,

and arrived with his fund but little lessened. The ostensible reason for his going home, besides that employment had ceased to be plenty upon the coast, was, that he might attend school through the winter, and to this end he faithfully devoted his time, helping his father in his leisure hours to cut wood for the family, and attend the cattle on the farm. Having invested his first year's earnings, he started on the approach of spring, upon his second campaign. He let himself to the same farmer, for increased wages, and returned in the fall with a larger amount. It was now that his temptations began. He had made many acquaintances among the young men, who, like himself, had been out to work for the summer, and some of them were not altogether so steady in their habits as he was. His intention was, still to attend school through the winter; but his new friends persuaded him to defer it for a time, in order to join them in an excursion for pleasure. After this, something else occurred, still further to put off his joining the school, till the winter was so far advanced, that he thought it was not worth while to attend at all. When the spring again returned, and he went off upon his third expedition, he was no richer than he was when he had started the year before; his

first year's earnings he left untouched, but he had added nothing to them. Again he let himself to the same farmer, who had found him so active and industrious, and his strength each year increasing, that he was willing still further to increase his wages. He now kept up his acquaintance with his winter companions, many of whom had let themselves in the same neighborhood. The consequence was, that he joined them in their evil ways, spending his wages almost as fast as he earned them, so that when the season was expired, he had scarce sufficient left to pay his passage home in the stage, which he now thought it was necessary to take, upon his return. His parent's house, and their hearts, were still open to receive him; but, changed as he was, they could not see him but with pain. He had labored three seasons, and when he set forward on the approach of the fourth, he was as pennyless as when he had first started in the world, and he must have gone forth almost destitute of clothes, had not the untiring love of his mother again provided him, by the labor of her own hands. He again offered his services to his first employer, who let him know he had no further occasion for them, and he was obliged to seek work elsewhere. It was four or five years before he again appeared in

the same neighborhood, and then, he was no longer the straight, lively, bright-looking youth he had once been, but had become coarse and burly in his appearance, with a slouching gait, and a downcast look. He applied for work at the farm where he had passed his days of hope, and offered to let himself cheap. One look at his bloated countenance convinced the farmer that his services must be dear, at whatever price they might be obtained, and he, of course, declined the offer. Joseph walked off, and did not again return.

In contrast to this story, I will relate another, of a young man whose original circumstances were very similar, but whose course, and the end to which it led, were entirely different. He came to work in the same neighborhood, about the same time, I think the very year, in which Joseph first made his appearance. His equal in age, he had, like him, just received from his father the gift of his time, and set out in the same manner to obtain, by his own labor, wherewith to purchase a farm. This youth came from the borders of Maine, and was the second of seven sons, their father's pride, as he led them forth together to the labors of the field. Two years had elapsed since the eldest had left his home, and he was already establish-

ed in a prosperous business at a distant place, when the second went forth from his father's house, henceforward to depend upon his own resources, and to enjoy the fruit of his own labor. He worked one summer for low wages upon a farm, and returned home to attend school, during the winter months; but the second year, he thought it was better to be earning a little than to go home, where, in the winter time, there was scarce work enough to employ the rest of his brothers. Nevertheless, in the leisure of the long evenings, he continued to improve himself as much as if he had gone home to attend the school. Thus he continued to labor for a number of years, paying short visits at home, from time to time, whither he carried his earnings to deposit on interest, with a neighboring trader. Being a stout and active man, with an established character for diligence and integrity, his services commanded the highest wages, and he was induced, by a favorable offer, to undertake an employment involving considerable responsibleness. At the end of twelve months, he found the work did not suit him, and resolved to return to farming; and he then found, on making a settlement, that his employer was more ready to enter into engagements, than to fulfil them. Finding he could

not get the money for his services, he was obliged to content himself with a note of hand for the amount of his wages, with but little hope that t would ever be paid. Scarcely had he made this arrangement with one man, and entered into an engagement with another, when he received intelligence that the individual with whom his first earnings were deposited, had failed. A few months before, he had thought himself worth eight or nine hundred dollars, the product of his own toil, with the interest accumulated upon it: he began to think of getting himself a wife, and purchasing a farm; but now, he must begin the world anew, without any other advantage than an established character. He was tempted to give up his hopes of independence upon a farm of his own, and to spend his money as he earned it; but he resisted the feeling, and once more set out to build up his fortune. As he now received very high wages, both summer and winter, he soon began again to look forward to the possession of a farm. After a few years, he made out to get back about one half of his first losses, and with the money he had since earned, he then, at thirty years of age, set out for the West, and is now the proprietor of a fine tract of prairie land, containing some hundreds of acres, and surrounded by a happy family.

Here we see a man, by once yielding to the temptation held out to him by his idle acquaintance, led on, step by step, till all his earthly prospects were ruined, and himself become an outcast upon the world, carrying in his very look, a caution to avoid him, and, most probably, causing the gray hairs of his parents to descend with sorrow to the grave. We find another, guarding against the approaches of sloth, and going on from year to year with increasing prosperity, and in spite of the loss of his first earnings, securing an independence, and, while still young, settled down in the midst of his own children, respected and looked up to by all his neighbors. Among all worldly enterprises, there is none more rational, or more deserving success, than the desire of a young man to obtain by the labor of his own hands a tract of land, on which to bring up his children in humble independence. There is no other which, in its successful issue, confers more respectability upon the individual, or brings more advantage to the community. But there are hundreds every year, who have their hopes cut off, and become nuisances, instead of blessings to society, for not steadily resisting the allurement to idleness, which the leisure of a long winter presents to that class of men.

After a man attains to middle age, and the full vigor of his physical and mental powers, it is not so common for habits of industry to be broken up; but still, there are instances, and various are the causes which have led to it. One is unsuccessful in life, and he becomes discouraged, and disgusted with the world; another is prospered, and thinks he may allow himself a little more ease. Both are in danger, when the beginning has been made, that the evil will grow upon them till it undermines their happiness. The world is full of such. You may see them moving about in every commercial community, dejected and unhappy, mere lookers-on, amid the bustle which surrounds them; and they are, in great proportion of cases, kept in this uncomfortable state, from no other necessity than a want of moral energy fixed upon them by long inaction, and which, at the beginning, might have been easily overcome. But, of the many causes which make way for the commencement of habits of inactivity, and the long train of sins and miseries, which generally attend them, there is none, perhaps, more certainly fatal, than a sudden and unexpected accession of wealth. Nothing more fully proves the short-sightedness of mankind, than that they should so generally covet, what, to almost every individual, would prove so ruinous.

How often do we see this wealth, this most desired of all the means of earthly enjoyment, bring wretchedness, rather than comfort to its possessor. For this dross, the bulk of mankind habitually sacrifice all hopes of future happiness; and, strange as it may appear, they willingly wear out their bodies to obtain it, and thus shorten their existence in this world, where they have chosen their inheritance. And when a man has the wealth he has so much desired, and which he finds brings him unhappiness, instead of the pleasure he expected, in what way is it more commonly done, than by enticing to indolence, and its attendant vices. He says, I have money, and why should I not enjoy it? And he does his best to enjoy it, and his best is but a feeble attempt; for it is seldom a man's real pleasures can be increased by wealth; at least, as it is commonly used, they cannot be.

Now, look forward a few years, and see! the riches have, perhaps, taken to themselves wings and flown away. For a while, the man may contrive to live upon credit; but that does not last long, where there is neither property nor industry to rest it upon. The individual becomes advanced in life, and long inactivity has deprived him of the skill which would make industry available, even if he could now

rouse himself to exertion. By the bounty of his friends he is, perhaps, provided with what is necessary to his existence; but he cannot but repine for his accustomed luxuries, and is miserable in the prospect of leaving his family to want. His children, to be sure, by industry and economy, might live very comfortably in the world; but, where can they have learned these virtues? Himself has set them an example of profuse waste, both of time and money, and they will be most likely to walk in his steps, whatever advice he may see fit to give them.

To a man thus situated, as he draws near to the close of life, how consoling must be the expectation of happiness in another world,—how cheering the hope, that he shall there meet with joy, those whom he must now leave in sorrow! But can a man who has thus lived, have hope in death? can he have any ground to expect that children thus brought up, will become prepared to meet their God? A life of pleasure is a life of sin, and cannot be a life of religion: children brought up in pleasure will love it, and will hate holiness. Happy, thrice happy, would such a man be, if the destruction of his earthly enjoyments should prepare his heart for the reception of heavenly joys; he would

then have more reason to be thankful, that he had grown poor, than he had before to rejoice when he became rich.

With such circumstances continually before the world, how strange it is, that all mankind should so universally desire to be rich, and should so generally think, in their own case, that wealth cannot come too suddenly? Each one supposes that he will be very prudent, that he will continue his habits of industry, that he will guard against the approach of evils; and if he does so, though riches may be a snare to others, they can never be so to him. So have thought all who have been ruined by them. Millions who have sold their souls to mammon, have been quite as confident, though now, in regions of despair, they curse their own folly, which could delude them to barter away their eternal happiness for a thing, which, even while they remained in the world, yielded them so little satisfaction.

When an individual has passed the meridian of his days, and his sun approaches the horizon, it may be supposed that, then, there is reason for his relaxing his exertions, and resting from his labors; that he will be more happy and more comfortable in his old age, if he allows himself to live at his ease. But it is not so; man can-

not be inactive, and continue happy. Accordingly, almost all, who have looked forward to the enjoyment of leisure, as they grew old, by retiring from business, have been sadly disappointed; they have become restless and uneasy, for want of their former occupations, and generally sink into premature decay. When the strength is on the wane, man should more than ever, if he regards his own comfort, watch against a disposition to inactivity; for then, it is too late to recover lost ground. So far, at least, as his own happiness is concerned, he should guard against the encroachments of sloth. I say, his own happiness, because, when he has arrived at that period of his life, his efforts may appear less necessary, to those who were before dependent upon him. His children may be, and generally are, able to provide for themselves; they are better fitted to work for him, than he is for them. With regard to himself, it may not be necessary that he should continue his exertions, to provide for his daily wants; for if he has been industrious and frugal, he has already secured a competence for his old age; and every man ought to make a *moderate* provision for that season, when he may no longer be able to work. But, if his children no more require it,

if his own support no longer demands it, still, if he wishes to keep his physical and mental energies alive, if he wishes to preserve himself from falling into a state of torpor, so that he shall become little better than a lump of breathing clay, let him never intermit his exertions; but, as he would wish to retain the faculties of his body and mind, let him be cautious to keep them bright, by not relaxing in his habits of activity. After all, age will bring on inaction to a certain degree, but we may often see instances, where the faculties are kept bright to the last, by not encouraging the disposition. After an instrument has been polished, if it is kept in continued use, the burnishing will be kept on till it is worn out; but, if once the rust is allowed to collect upon it, no future use can remove the corrosion from its surface. Where the rust has once been allowed to rest, on that spot will it most readily take hold again; and in like manner with the human mind, where the rust of sloth has obtained a footing, it will leave an indelible impression—a cankered spot, on which it can again fasten with increased facility. In old age the edge has been worn down, the metal which has become exposed, is more liable to corrode than the well-tempered steel, with which it was once faced, and, therefore,

increased vigilance is necessary lest the first spot settle upon it.

I was once speaking with an old gentleman, whose upright form, and active energetic mind, were the admiration of all who saw him: he had entered his ninth decade with his faculties as bright, his sensibilities as keen, his heart as tender, as they were in the days of his youth. We were talking of some old men, who were in the habit of meeting to gossip in a particular place: he said, they were "lazy fellows; that they were none of them much over seventy years of age, and they all were well able to work; but they thought, because they were getting old, they might lay idle, some of them to be supported by their children." He had a right to speak, for though a dozen years older than the eldest of them, he was still in the active exercise of his calling. His strength might not be so great as it had been half a century before, but, to the extent of his powers, he still continued active. The consequence was, that he retained the power of action for years, making himself, by his cheerfulness, the delight of his friends; by his benevolence, causing himself to be loved by all with whom he came in contact; and continuing to fill with energy, a useful station in the world, till he was taken from it with

the vigor of his mind still unimpaired, while the others were sinking fast into the helplessness, and querulousness, often, but improperly, considered the necessary accompaniments of old age. When this old gentleman had labored three score years in his vocation, he said, he thought he had worked long enough; but when he looked round upon his acquaintance, he saw, that such as had retired from their business appeared to have retired also from their comfort. He said he felt a disposition to inactivity growing upon him, and he knew, that, unless stimulated by the necessity of attending to his business, he should soon cease to move at all, but should sink down into a state of lethargy, which would render the residue of his years but labor and sorrow.

An old man might think, that, as long as he had a comfortable provision for himself, and, as long as his children were doing well for themselves, there could be no more occasion for him to labor, and that he should want the stimulus which would render the the labor easy. He might say very properly to himself—"I have sufficient for my own comfort; if I acquire more, I cannot enjoy it; my children are provided for; why should I seek to lay up wealth for them? It cannot add to their happiness, and

will, most probably, become a snare to them. If these motives are taken away, what, then, is there to stir up my mind to effort? Without an adequate stimulus, labor becomes too irksome to be persevered in. The best answer would be—"There are others in the world, besides yourself and your children, and you can never want work in doing good; pleasant work it is, too, as all those who have tried it will tell you. If yourself and your family do not require your labors, still labor for those that do, and an agreeable stimulus will never be wanting to make light your toil. You will find that no work you have ever done, has been more richly repaid: man never grows too old to do good to his fellows."

Every one is ready to allow, that the first steps towards idleness are dangerous to youth—that they may prove destructive during the active years of manhood; and we see, too, unless I am mistaken in all which I have been saying, that there is reason to fear them to the very verge of life, lest, even in our last days they betray us to misery. I would be far from urging a man to industry through life, for the mere purpose of acquiring wealth. After a moderate competence is provided, all that he can obtain will not add to his happiness, but very

much to his cares. If he is successful in heaping up riches, they will, most assuredly, destroy the sensibilities of his own heart, and, with almost as much certainty, prove the destruction of his children. But there is a way to provide employment, pleasant employment, for every season of life, alike avoiding the evil consequences of making wealth our god, and the danger arising from the encroachments of inactivity. I think I could name more than one, who have adopted such a plan, and have proved its efficacy in adding to their own happiness, and to the happiness of all connected with them. It is simply this: let a man, whatever be his age, when he finds that a portion of his labor can provide comfortably for those dependent upon him, devote his surplus energies to some benevolent object.

What is there in this world, can present to the mind a more pleasing view, than to see old age creeping upon a man, while his activity remains unimpaired, and the field of his benevolence continually enlarging? Would, that the sight were more common; then should we cease to see so many dragging themselves, in weariness and languor, through their latter days; then should we be spared the more distressing view, of the old man hugging still closer his money-bags, as he steps into the grave.

Chapter VIII.

On the Growth and Influence of a Worldly Spirit.

"And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for it is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If, therefore, thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

In this world we have to watch, continually, our approach to danger on every side. Here is Scylla and opposite Charybdis; between them is the proper channel, where alone is safety. If we carelessly stray this way, we are in danger of being dashed upon the rocks; if we wander upon the other side, the whirlpool is ready to swallow us up. It is so in the moral world; every vice has its opposite vice, and between them lies the safe channel of virtue. Mankind have been ever prone to steer across this channel, and, in avoiding one vice, fall into its opposite, forgetting that every vice is but the excess of some virtue. One man perceives the danger on one side, and, thinking

only of that, rushes into the opposite; of which another is aware, and in his anxiety to avoid it, dashes headlong into the first. They are both about equally wise; that is, about as wise as one mariner would be, who should inform himself of the dangers on one side only, and steer directly into the whirlpool, which he discovers, by observing that his ship will no longer obey her helm, and when, of course, there can be no hope of escape; or, as another who has found out the whirlpool, and crowding every stitch of canvass to get away from its influence, dashes his bark with fury upon the opposing rock.

Thus, on one side have we idleness, on which to wreck our hopes in time, and for eternity; on the other side, is worldliness of spirit, destructive of present happiness, and hurrying men's souls into perdition. On the middle ground of moderation and industry, can we alone find safety.

Though inactivity is so ensnaring, when its first approaches are not resisted, and so destructive when it has secured a footing, yet it is not more necessary to be watched against, than is worldliness of mind; for the last is not less ruinous to the soul, and it is even more insidious in its advances. It is the more to be fear-

ed, in that it carries with it the approbation of a majority of mankind, and because it may have taken a resistless hold of its victim, before even the wise and the good have suspected aught to be wrong. Its grasp once secured, it gnaws away at the heart of its captive, till it has eat out all the substance, leaving it as hollow, and as lifeless, as a dried honey-comb. There is an end, then, to all the kindly feelings of our nature; the sympathies of life are destroyed, swallowed up by the ruling passion. Friends are sacrificed to it—children are immolated upon its altar—no relation, no chain of early affection is allowed to interfere with its despotic rule. And if the rights of kindred are disregarded, or their interest accommodated to the ruling passion, it is not to be supposed, that any foreign claims will be allowed. Accordingly, the calls of benevolence, the demands of charity, are never considered; not that money may not sometimes be given to the cries of distress, but there is no benevolence in the heart, and the apparent act of charity may be only to get rid of the annoyance in the shortest way; but, not unfrequently, is it made to do its part in furtherance of the leading object. Can it be denied that this is so? Look, then, at that little shrivelled up old man. You

may see him any day upon change. You would think he was seventy years old, yet he is scarce turned of fifty. See how cautiously he seems to walk, while his restless grey eye diligently examines every thing within the scope of his vision. Nothing escapes his notice. Has one of his friends become embarrassed? he quickly detects it in his looks, and is ready to lend him a helping hand down hill, by urging the speedy payment of any claims he may have against him, and, if necessary, to put an execution upon his goods; and when they are sold at auction, on his own or another's suit, he thinks himself happy if he can feather his own nest by purchasing them at half their value. Yet he called that man his friend so long as he was prospered; and he will perhaps express some pity for his misfortunes, and then forget him when he has fallen into obscurity. Such are very many of the friendships of the world. But it is not misfortune alone, that he is quick to discover. Another friend is engaged in a prosperous speculation; it does not long escape his penetration, and he hastens to lessen his friend's profits, and increase his own, by entering upon a like enterprise himself. But this is an every-day occurrence, too common to excite remark.

This man may be found each morning at his

counting-room, and late at night he is still at his desk. A few minutes must suffice for each hurried meal, and when he goes home at night, it is but to retire to rest, that he may be early at his business the next day. Thus passes the round of the week, but on Saturday night he stays later, because he can lie longer on Sunday morning; and when he returns to his home, he may be seen by the watch, (for no one else is stirring at that hour,) trudging along with a huge bundle of books under his arm, that the precious moments of the coming Sabbath may not be unemployed. And what are the books thus prudently prepared to occupy the time which God has mercifully set apart for us, to fit ourselves for the enjoyments of heaven? One must be the Bible! No: there is no Bible there! but the waste, and the leger, and the account-current book, and others, too numerous to mention. He cannot spare time even on the Sabbath, to worship God, and scarce a moment for intercourse with his family and friends. The fact is, he has lost his relish for every thing but debtor and creditor.

It would be a natural question to ask — Can such a man have any one to care for — and if he has, can he have ever possessed the feelings of humanity? He has an amiable wife; he

has been blessed with interesting children; and he cares for them, as far as he can care for any thing that has not a marketable value. He was married young, and was, no doubt, attached to his wife. He was then poor, and it was to provide for her and her children, that he first devoted himself to his business. He soon found that his industry gained him credit, and when he had a little surplus money he laid it by; and he soon began to feel a pleasure in hoarding, which was not diminished when he found how much more he was respected in the world as his wealth increased. It was still for his children that he labored, though he took little care of them in other respects, except to make his sons attentive to business, and to marry his daughters to rich men, regardless of their happiness in any thing else. He succeeded in his wishes. His sons were prepared to walk in his steps, his daughters rich and unhappy. But he was not the less busy; not the less eager to make his thousands of dollars by a good speculation; none the less careful to save a few cents by driving a hard bargain for his work with the poor laborer, whose family looked to him for their daily bread.

Could this man, thirty years before, have been shown just such a character as I have now de-

scribed, he would have revolted from it in disgust. If he had been told that his body would be turned into a mere machine to mark down dollars and cents, and his mind into a sort of mint to coin them; that neither body nor soul would be fit for any other use, or capable of enjoying any other employment, he could not have believed it, though, at the very moment, he had settled into the course of life which must lead to such a result.

And if such is the effect of a worldly spirit, how can a young person be too cautious in allowing it to commence its growth? What a round of occupation and enjoyment, for a rational being to be reduced to! And what a preparation for eternity!

This may be thought an highly charged picture of human degradation; it may, nevertheless, be a true one. I believe it to be true; and I should not have attempted to draw it, had I not supposed it was substantially so of very many whom the world esteem. Almost every place can provide instances still more marked; for such an one as I have described will not have gained the character of a miser; and there is scarce a large community, where there are not some who have. But thousands, who thus make wealth the object of pursuit, are less rational than any

brute in their desires, though they may show more intelligence in the pursuit of them. What a sorry creature, after all, is man, who can thus pervert the faculties God has given him, for his enjoyment and improvement in this world, and to be used in preparation for another! Can such a being believe himself immortal? He surely cannot, unless he thinks he is to spend eternity in scraping together glittering dross, or, at least, that the wealth he heaps up, but cannot use in this world, will purchase him an entrance at the gates of Paradise. Why should such a man desire to go to heaven? Heaven would be no heaven to him, where there was no gold! Of such a man might our Savior say, that it was easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

It is not only to the man who has grown old in worldly habits, till the spirit shows itself in such excess as to be remarked by all, but to thousands of young persons may the same be said — to all who have allowed the spirit of the world to settle upon them, making them averse to all the better feelings and better hopes of our nature. To the old man, whose heart the deceitfulness of riches have been hardening for a long course of years, it is almost vain to speak

at any time. That heart has become harder than the nether millstone, and you may impress the last about as easily as you can the first. But let those who are yet young, whose habits are yet unsettled, whose hearts have some remaining sensibility, let those, I say, beware how they take another step in this ensnaring road; if they are already advanced, let them with all diligence retrace their steps, before their whole souls become deluded, and they begin to think there can be no good, but in gain. And to those, especially, who are just starting in the world, with their souls as yet uncontaminated with its spirit, I would say,—be cautious how you allow that spirit to light upon you; it is the spirit of evil, which will, like a canker, eat into your heart to its very core; it will gnaw away all the kindly affections, all the tender sensibilities of your nature; it will convert your body into a miserable piece of mechanism, and prepare your soul to be a fit associate, in another world, for no other than the company of fiends and of spirits condemned, like your own, to eternal misery. Avoid it, then, as you would retain to yourself any portion of comfort in this world, any chance for happiness in that better world which is yet to come. Flee from it as you would flee from contagion; dread it more

than you would dread the pestilence, or the coming of certain death itself; for what is death, temporal death, when compared with that ceaseless gnawing pain, that everlasting torment, which, to the last ages of eternity, will be but begun, and for which, the love of riches is preparing all its votaries?

But is the desire of wealth, the only form in which the spirit of the world deludes its victims? Far, very far, from it. The shrivelled, dried, and cankered heart of the miser is not more hateful, it is less loathsome than the swelled and bloated heart of the ambitious man. Whether, as a soldier, as a statesman, as a professional man, and, more than any other, as the false and hypocritical minister of the gospel, he whose sole object is to exalt himself, possesses a soul, than which, nothing can be more disgusting to every pure intelligence.

When such a spirit has taken possession of a man, he will wade through the blood of his fellows, and rejoice to trample down the bodies of those who have never injured him, so that he may raise himself a little higher to be looked at by the world; he will do right or wrong, so that he may lift himself another step, and will even cringe to the multitude he despises, if they will only raise him to power. He

will plead at the bar the cause of the widow, of the fatherless, and the oppressed, that he may pamper his own pride by extending his fame: but he is equally ready to plead against them, if, by so doing, he can promote his own selfish purposes; nay, he is more solicitous to gain an unjust cause, for the worse the cause, the more it will establish his reputation if he wins it. And he that fattens on the blood of souls—he, too, can suit himself to his circumstances; he can preach the true gospel, or, rather, the doctrines of the gospel, when they will serve to display his eloquence, and puff him up before his hearers; but he would have found it equally easy to have conformed to any variety of falsehood, if it would have answered better for the same purpose.

The soldier, at one time, would have shuddered to think of the murders he can now commit without remorse; his heart would almost have burst, had he thought of the tears that would be shed, and the groans that would be uttered, occasioned by the acts he was thereafter to bring to pass. But when he first put his pride to nurse, he was preparing a principle that would steel his heart against the sighs of his fellow-creatures, and make ready his hand for the commission of every atrocity that could

minister to its nourishment and promote its growth. It might have been at first, and often is, so contemptible a thing as the love of dress, a desire to gratify a puerile vanity, by appearing in a military coat; and, from this feeble beginning, has it grown, till the soul of the man is changed to the spirit of a fiend. What less than that can it be, which is so swelled with pride, as to seek the blood of a fellow-creature for the mere utterance of a word, and which is always prepared, and is rejoiced at the opportunity to slaughter thousands, who have never given even so much provocation.

Take the statesman, who directs the soldier to the field of blood. How would he have started back in his young and tender years, had he been told that he should ever cause the death of thousands, or bring ruin and distress upon whole tracts of country. Yet will he recklessly do it, that he may extend his fame or secure his power. He would be glad, no doubt, to attain the same results by promoting happiness; but, attain them he must, by whatever course is most likely to effect his object. His wish is to fill a place in the world's eye; and he can take a stand in the cause of humanity, he can seek to relieve the oppressed, he can devise methods to bring peace, plenty, or security to a nation;

and when he commenced his career, he, probably, was determined that such should be his course; perhaps, so blinding is ambition and self-love, he even persuaded himself, that, to do this, was his sole object in entering upon a political life. But when he has once started, and he finds the spirit of the times inclines to other measures, he does not hesitate to fall in with them; and to forward his own schemes of self-aggrandizement, he can study oppression and scatter misery. If he finds that trials of tumult suit his genius, he will learn to prefer them; if he finds war and bloodshed tend to confirm and increase his power, wars and bloodshed will be his policy. He will not profess to like anarchy, but he will cry reform; he will not commend hostilities and slaughter in the abstract, but will talk of justice, national rights, and national honor. Whatever may be the given reason, the worldly-minded statesman is guided in every word and in every act by self; the heart is so filled with self, that there is room for nothing else, and he is governed alone by its influence.

It is somewhat curious to observe how Proteus-like this spirit is in different men, who are ruled by it, and even in the same individual, according to the source from which he derives

his power, and to its stability and independence. If he derives his consequence from a source disconnected from the opinions and good-will of his inferiors, he will appear haughty and overbearing; or, if he has too much good sense to let his high-mindedness appear in that way, he still keeps them at a distance. You do not see him talk to them on equal terms; but, when he condescends to speak, there is that in his look and manner which plainly says to the meaner man, "I am of the porcelain clay, but you are made of the mud on which I tread!" there is something in the great man's ways that will not allow the inferior to forget the vast difference between them: it may be but an excess of urbanity and condescension, but it causes him to remember that he is the slave, talking with his master, or the boor speaking to his prince, or the subject in the presence of the minister or governor appointed by his king. The conduct of the superior plainly shows, that his rank and station are in no respect dependent upon the individual before him. In these cases the pride is planted in infancy; it is nourished and cultivated by the parent's careful hand; it is fostered through the whole course of education; and when it has attained its growth, the individual swells

and stretches, as if the heart had become too bloated for the space to which it is confined.

But there is not less pride, nor less love of power, in those cases where the individual is obliged to put on the cloak of humility, and condescend to those, who, however he may despise them in his heart, possess an influence in continuing or destroying his authority. There may be, and I believe there are, many men engaged in politics, whose intentions are as upright, and their motives are as pure, and who are as little governed by selfish interests, as any men in any other situation; that is, as much so as human nature, in its present degraded state, will allow; and such men will be equally free from any haughty bearing, and from any cringing artfulness. But take a man, whom the god of this world claims as wholly his own, and who is seeking to pamper his pride by gaining admission to the public councils of his state or nation, —see how he scrapes and bows, and smiles to each poor man he meets in the streets, while he is laughing in his sleeve that the poor scrubs should think that he respects them. If he bends lower to one man than he does to another, it is because the first can cast a vote, and it would be cheaply bought by a bow. See him squeezing the dirty hands of his constituents,

as if he loved them with all his heart; he listens eagerly to all they say, laughs heartily at their stale and vulgar jokes, and, perhaps, joins with them in drinking sling, toddy, or black strap from the same mug. A member of Congress has been known to do all this; but, in most cases, there is too much pride to descend quite so low, even for the acquisition of power.

And yet, take the most proud and haughty man in almost any community, and you will often find he is the one who will stoop the lowest to gain the favor of those who can advance him to power. Not that there is any real degradation in condescending to men in low estate; but it is debasing for a man to do so for selfish purposes, to those who, otherwise, he would despise. In nothing is the corruption of the human heart more apparent, and in scarce any thing does it appear more disgusting; for it is not, that the proud man bows himself before the poor only, but he will cringe to the vilest and most profligate of his race, if he can thereby gain a vote. He is contemptible, and appears so in the eyes of the very mob, to which he levels himself. But he is satisfied, and they are satisfied. He has his reward in gaining their votes: they are gratified by being put upon an equality with the great man. It is a sort of

bribery, but neither party thinks of or cares for that,—they despise him for his sycophancy: he is disgusted by their vulgarity; but is glad to get their votes, which they are willing to give as a returned value for their gratified vanity.

How contemptible does a man appear, who will thus degrade himself, by wearing two faces to secure a little worldly exaltation! What addition of outward honors can raise a man from the depths of such abasement? It is very natural to ask, Can this have been a proud man? It seems strange, that one can thus crawl in the dirt and yet be proud; but this man may be one of the proudest of his cotemporaries; and he does all this to gratify his pride.

Now, take this man in his youth, before intercourse with the world and the habit of self-exaltation had contaminated his heart, drying up the better feelings of his nature; and suppose just such a character described to him as he was afterwards to become;—would not he turn with disgust from the degrading portrait? He is just beginning to look forward to a political life, and to be pleased with the hopes of the coming exaltation, or as, perhaps, he expresses it himself, to the prospect of future usefulness. If you could convince him of the debasement to which ambition and pride are about to reduce

him, would he not be cautious how he allowed them to get a footing in his mind? Would he not abhor the thought of despising a good man, because he filled a more obscure station than himself; and would he not, still more, revolt at the idea of cringing to the meanest and vilest of those he despised, to gain from him so small a thing as a vote? And yet, any one who allows the small beginning of pride and ambition, is permitting that which may lead him to, he cannot tell how much wickedness and degradation; he is nourishing that, to which he will, hereafter, sacrifice every interest, every bond of affection. There is no tie of nature so strong, that it must not yield to the ruling demon which has taken possession of his soul. Does the avaricious man sell his children's happiness for gold? In like manner will the ambitious man barter that of his offspring for power. Does the one neglect the wife of his youth, to give himself up to gain? So is the other ready to sacrifice the comfort of his, and to wear her out to promote his political views. Judas sold his Master for gold; Ahithopel betrayed his for power. Wordly men then, as now, were governed by a like spirit, which, though it take a variety of forms, has its end and its aims the same, by whatever means circumstances may

lead it to seek them. In one individual it assumes the shape of avarice; another, it leads in the paths of ambition; and a third, guided by the same spirit, seeks literary fame, and makes that the stepping-stone to worldly consideration, the object alike of all; with each one the idol for exaltation is the same—it is self. It is not probable when Judas joined our Savior, that his heart was ripe for such an act as he afterwards committed; but it is probable, that the seed was already planted, which was to bring forth such bitter fruits. His motive, in following Jesus, was, no doubt, a selfish one. In him, he saw fulfilled the prophecies which marked him out as the Messiah; and thinking, like the other apostles, that he was come to restore the kingdom of Israel, how could he better promote his own views of aggrandizement, than by joining in his train of followers? It is most likely, that he thought that our blessed Lord himself was preaching repentance as a stepping-stone to an earthly crown; and, from the state of his own heart, he could have had no other motive than his personal advancement, although we do not learn, from the histories, that he preached the gospel less zealously than the other disciples. When they were sent forth, two and two, he was in one of the pairs; nor do we find any

intimations that he was suspected of dishonesty or unfaithfulness. It is not probable, that at that time he suspected himself to be wanting in integrity, and had affairs taken the turn which he expected, the world might never have known it. There might have been nothing, thus, to have distinguished his future life from that of the other disciples. The all-powerful influences of the Holy Spirit could have preserved them ; but, judging according to the effect of causes as we see them operating around us, we must suppose that, in such a case, the other disciples would have become worldly in their minds, and Judas would have found it for his interest to be as faithful as the rest. But when he found that the Messiah was not to be received by the nation, and that all his calculations and all his labors were likely to prove vain, in his disappointment and chagrin he resolved to seek other means. He had determined to be rich, and rich he would be. When the temptation to sell his Lord was presented to him, it is probable he thought that the opportunity had then offered to effect his purpose ; and when he found that the priests did not place so high a value upon their victim as he had expected, or that they were obliged to drive a hard bargain with him, having already yielded his

integrity in taking the first step, he was determined to get what he could for it; and, accordingly, he made the trifle we read of, the price of his Master's blood. I think it must have been some such process as this, or, perhaps, irritation at being discovered in some former delinquency, which led him to his treason; for, prince of traitors as he is always considered, I can hardly conceive so small a sum to have been the original temptation to so much perfidy. Can it be supposed, that Judas, when he entered the ministry, was capable of that vile act by which he was at last so fully ripened for perdition? It is probable that he would then have detested the very thoughts of such a thing; but the principle which was to prepare him for it, it is equally probable, was already implanted in his heart, and Jesus, who could read the heart, must have seen it there; and when he gave him part in his ministry, he must have known that he was fitted to do what God had foreordained should be done.

If we were to look round upon the Christian church, and, especially, could we, like our Savior, look into the heart, how many should we see who have entered, or are entering upon the ministrations of the gospel with Judas' views and from Judas' motives, varied only as the

circumstances of their situation have caused them to vary. Perhaps human nature, in its very best examples, cannot show us any instances of individuals, who, in their actions, are wholly freed from the influence of all secondary and selfish motives; the most that we have any right to expect, is a constant and determined resistance to them. If any have resisted so stoutly as, with God's help, wholly to overcome the power of these influences, they have made a noble progress, indeed, in the work of sanctification. Some such there may have been among the earliest Christians, and some few there are, I trust, even at the present day; and, I believe, they will be found now, as then, to be chiefly such as have been made what they are, by having passed through the furnace. Wherefore, if the leading principle is correct, it is as much as we can generally look for; and the individual must be allowed the credit of sincerity, although secondary motives may sometimes force themselves into his mind; that is, however, provided such motives are steadily resisted, and never allowed to interfere with the performance of duty. But those, who take upon them the vows to preach the gospel, without the fixed desire to do it faithfully, caring little for the winning of souls to Christ, so they

can but effect their own selfish purpose, whether that purpose be to gain a livelihood, or to exhibit their talents to advantage, or to get credit with a party, or for any other of the Proteus forms of selfishness,—all, whatever motive they may have, except they are actuated by the desire to serve God and do good to mankind, are entering the ministry as Judas entered, and, if tempted or provoked like Judas, would be ready to betray *him*, whose vows they have upon them, as they are even now betraying his cause; they are preparing, unless God, in his mercy, step in to prevent it, to die, like Judas, a death of despair, and to dwell side by side with him through eternity, amid the accumulated horrors of the lowest hell.

I have known one such minister,— would I could say I had known but one. His utter worldliness of spirit left no ground, on which charity could plant a hope that the heart might, after all, be right. It probably never occurred to him, to compare himself to Judas, for he utterly despised any littleness of mind; and yet he was betraying the cause he had vowed to maintain,—every week did he betray it in his preaching, and daily in his life. How could a man preach the gospel who had found scarce time to refresh himself with sleep, since

the midnight hour had overtaken him at the card-party or ball? And yet this man delighted to preach—not that his heart yearned to see the sinner awakened and anxiously seeking the way of salvation; nor that it was his chief joy to see the humbled penitent finding rest at the foot of the cross; nor yet, that he mourned in the bitterness of his soul for the perverseness and stupidity of the pleasure-taking thoughtless world. Such never heard aught from him to rouse them from their lethargy: he preached good sense and sound morality, but the gospel he did not preach; he did not strive with the sinner to turn him from the error of his way, nor did he wrestle with God to turn him; he did not delight to dwell upon a Savior's love, or to set forth the hopes of salvation through his blood. But he entered the pulpit that himself might be conspicuous. He was eloquent, and, of course, admired; his discourses were well seasoned with wit, and crowds flocked to hear him that they might be amused; he had talents and learning, which drew into his audience the wise and intelligent. Moreover, he was kind-hearted and friendly, and, therefore, beloved; he was a pleasant companion, and his society was sought after; he was a kind, affectionate husband, and, as the world would say, a good

father, a good citizen, and an high-minded honest man; therefore he was by the world respected.

And could a man, who was thus honest and upright in his dealings with the world, who had so lofty a spirit as to despise all meanness and littleness of soul,—could such a man be a traitor? Could this man, with so kind an heart, with such affectionate feelings, betray his Master? Were we to imagine the character of Judas, as it appeared before his treason was known, we should bestow upon him very different qualities; yet we know not, but Judas may have exhibited many amiable traits of character.

The true way to judge of a man's faithfulness, is by comparing his acts with the obligations he has entered into; the contract must be read, and the after conduct compared with it. What earthly tribunal would ever think of deciding by any other rule in the affairs of the world? And shall not God require the fulfilment of the solemn contract made with him? When a man enters into an obligation, without any intentions to abide by it, is he not deliberately entering upon the course of fraud and dishonesty necessary to avoid it? When Judas accepted the office of an apostle, was he not intentionally setting out upon a life of hypocrisy

and guilt, of which his treason was only the last act? And, when any one, at the present day, enters upon the same ministry from any worldly motive, he is taking but one of the earlier steps in a course to be characterized by similar wickedness. Sometimes God interposes, by his providence, to arrest the steps of such an one in the midst of his career, and makes him afterwards an instrument of extensive usefulness, as we may see in the case of Leigh Richmond, and of others; and if this does not happen, yet often, when sickness has reduced the strength, and death is knocking at their door, are they made to exclaim in anguish of spirit, as did the poor man I have referred to, that, if he could once more return to his neglected flock, he would teach them in a very different manner from his former custom. God did not see fit to test the sincerity of his repentance, by again restoring him to health and strength. But oh! how much cause for gratitude and praise has that man, who has been an unfaithful shepherd, if he is not made at last to lie down in despair! Where is the long-suffering and forbearance, and the merciful goodness of God more signally displayed, than when he grants a dying hope to one who has, through a long life, faithlessly led his flock astray,

while he has nourished himself upon their milk, and clothed himself with their fleece? Where is the infinite love of Jesus made more manifest, than when, with his own blood, he washes away the guilt of that man, whose business it has been to betray him to be crucified? What can such an one expect, but that, as the scenes of this world close upon him, he should be made to look forward with anguish to a horrid eternity, and when the gates of death have closed upon him, find that his fearful anticipations are more than realized? Oh! who can estimate the unutterable terror with which the faithless shepherd shall at last meet those souls, which he has betrayed to perdition!

But it is not those ministers alone, who enter deliberately upon their office to promote their own selfish views, who have occasion to fear the growth of a worldly spirit. We are all beset with snares through the whole course of our pilgrimage. The god of this world well knows when, and how, to throw out his baits, and we have continual need of watchfulness, lest we be entangled in his net. And the minister of the gospel, no less than others, has occasion for vigilance that he do not become ensnared. His motives may be right in entering the ministry, or, if they are wrong, he may

fail to detect them; and yet, he may find himself way-laid on the right hand and on the left, till, at last, he is induced to sell his Master's cause and his own soul for some golden or some gilded bait. A clergyman, for instance, may be tempted to make some small speculation; he is successful; his soul has tasted the sweets of gain, and is induced to try again; and he goes on from one thing to another, till he exhibits what, for the disgrace of his profession, is no imaginary case, a man deeply engaged in commercial transactions for six days of the week, and, on the Sabbath, entering the pulpit with the pretence of preaching the gospel to the flock over whom he is the settled pastor. Now, probably, in this man's course, each successive step appeared as insignificant as the first. How watchful, then, should each one be of that first step!

To a clergyman, as to all others, there is nothing more ensnaring than riches, and especially when there is a sudden accession of wealth. Look round upon the soldiers enlisted under the banner of the cross, and see how many deserters, and how many traitors there are among them; men, who once appeared faithful and zealous, but have now become careless and lukewarm. Some who were once

manfully fighting the good fight of faith, have since retired from the service, forgetful of the solemn promises they had made, never to lose an opportunity of calling sinners to repentance: —these are the deserters. Others, who have entered into the same engagements, and who, for a while, did faithfully fulfil them, may be seen still at their posts, but, unmindful of their first love, have lost their zeal, but yet continue to fill their stations, to the exclusion of better men:—these are the traitors. The first have ceased to do good in leading men to salvation; the last are doing positive evil by preventing them, and may be justly accused of betraying souls to hell. What now has been the bait employed to draw these men from their duty? How has their adversary contrived to make these Achans in the camp, bringing a curse upon the people, and disgrace upon the church? How could it be done more effectually, than by luring them with wealth? And, accordingly, we see, in a great proportion of cases, that has been the instrument employed by the arch-enemy to accomplish his ends, in destroying their usefulness, if he does not succeed in making sure the perdition of their souls. How must the fiend exult to feel the fools nibbling at his gilded hook! And when he finds the barb well

fixed in their jaws, how will he delight to play them off before the world; and when he has exhibited them to his satisfaction here, with what a hideous laugh will he receive them to his fiery embrace, and what a pleasure will he take in seeing them tormented for their folly!

If any one will take the pains to examine into facts, he will find, in a large majority of those instances, where a minister, or a private professor, have for a while run well, and excited the hopes of God's people, and afterwards have fallen away and forgotten their first love, that wealth has been the temptation which has allured them to apostasy. It is not always the case that this effect is produced; for there are some noble examples of men, who have faithfully improved their increased means, as an increase of talents, for which they are accountable.

But where wealth has been sought for, or desired, I fear not to say, that the acquisition has always been followed by luke-warmness at least. If a man will be rich, the devil can easily suggest excuses to him. He generally says to himself, as the politician says when he is reaching after power, that he seeks it for the purpose of doing good to his fellow-creatures.

He will commonly quiet his conscience, as

the merchant quiets his when entering on an iniquitous speculation, saying, it is not for himself he does it, but for the benefit of others. But when mankind are seeking for wealth, or power, or fame, they are actuated by one and the same spirit; 'tis the love of the world and the things of the world, inconsistent with the love of God, inseparable from the love of self. A man may come to power and fame without making them an object of pursuit; and, though it is hardly possible for human nature not to be pleased with obtaining them, however they may have been acquired, yet, in such a case, if the influence derived from them is faithfully employed to God's glory and the good of mankind, they may fail to be a snare to the soul, and even be reckoned among those well-improved talents which shall receive a rich reward. And wealth, too, may be so used, that the possessor shall, at last, be greeted with the commendation and the blessing to the good and faithful servant. But it is seldom, very seldom, improved in such a manner, that the accounts of the trustee will bear the scrutiny of the last day, however in this world he may have received the praise of men.

A man very often seeks influence, with the intentions of dedicating it to God; but, unless

he devotes himself to God from the beginning, all he obtains will be dedicated to himself in the end. A man may enter upon a lucrative profession, resolved to use what he acquires in God's service, after he shall have made a moderate provision for himself; but his ideas of a moderate provision will go on continually enlarging, and he will go on to his life's end laying up for himself, paying tithes of mint and cummin, perhaps to satisfy his conscience. Some have entered upon such a business for the expressed purpose of serving God in that way, and, by consecrating their gains to him from the beginning, have resisted the world even to the end,—whereas, had they determined to serve themselves first, themselves would they have served to the last.

Our whole experience and all observation must teach us, that a worldly spirit cannot occupy the same dwelling with the spirit of devotion; whatever form the first may take, they will always be totally at variance, and one or the other must be expelled. Mankind are slow in listening to experience, and backward to make observations that are likely to interfere with their inclinations; but that there may be no doubt, it is revealed to us in the word of God. Jesus said of the young ruler, that it was easier for a camel to pass a needle's eye,

than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven; and his reproaches to the Pharisees, who were seeking fame and power, show that he did not view their forms of worldliness with any more favor. The same word teaches us the danger and guilt of the earliest beginnings of evil. Our Savior cautions us to resist the first inclination of our thoughts. He does not tell us of the guilt of murder, but warns us against the guilt of the first angry feelings: he not only tells us not to injure our neighbor, but to resist the first covetous desires. He tells us but of two ways, the way of life, and the broad road leading to destruction. This broad road approaches to, and even touches upon, the straight aad narrow path, through the whole course of our pilgrimage; so that we have continual need of vigilance, lest we get into it. In many places the two ways appear so nearly in the same direction, that, without care, we may easily step from one to the other; and, without perceiving that we have changed our course, we may get very much astray. For where two lines are drawn from one point, if they diverge ever so little at first, they will at last get to be very far apart. Besides, when we are accustomed to the broad road, we shall learn not to be startled, even when we come to a rank turn in it.

Chapter IX.

The Conclusion of the whole Matter.

"When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."

I have now attempted to take a survey of that broad and crowded road, which leads down to the gates of death. It has been, indeed, but a partial survey, and that, only of some few of the many paths and turns with which that road abounds. It has been my object to convince the reader, or rather to persuade him to consider, that the ways of sin are the ways of death, and, especially, to warn him to be watchful against the first steps he may be tempted to take in any of them. They are all winding ways; so winding, that no one who enters upon any one of them can, by any possibility, tell whither it will lead him. But we know, in general, that they all lead to hell: but this, the deluded travellers in them will not consider.

I have failed of my object, if I have not made it appear, that the expectation of pleasure from continuing in sin is, in general, delu-

than for a rich man to enter t' he
Heaven; and his reproaches *give*
who were seeking fame and *find*
he did not view their form *es the*
any more favor. The *l mor-*
the danger and guilt o' *s us to take*
of evil. Our Savior c *t*, alas! With
inclination of our t' *hen too late, that*
us of the guilt of r *arbed hook. Even in*
the guilt of the to yield the expected joy.
only tells us n *narrow as it is, and appearing*
resist the fir *are not in it, too straight to be*
but of two w *with pleasure or comfort, proves, after*
road leadi *the path of peace; and it leads, even*
approac *world, to the most real joy.*
straigh *Let us review some of the ground over which*
cours *have gone. One of the principal paths of*
tinu *broad road, if not the broad road itself, is*
ma *marked Pride. This passion the tempter ex-*
th *cites in man by the promise of exaltation over*
e *his fellow-creatures, and sometimes, to pamper*
I *it, persuades his deluded victim to declare him-*
self independent of his Maker. It shows itself in ambition and avarice, in the love of display, in the spirit of exclusion, in envyings and ill-will. It breaks out in anger and stubbornness, in oppression, in overbearing and tyranny, in backbiting and evil-speaking. Its just rewards

ruits are, discontent and uneasi-
d mind, a disturbed conscience,
life, and a wretched death.
in the turmoil of ambi-
defeats? Who envies
pointed avarice, or of frus-
Let him cherish his pride, and
his wishes; or, if in these things
ccessful, he will find more bitterness in success than in the disappointment. Who would wish to cherish ill-will to his fellow-creatures, envy towards his superiors, and contempt for those below him,—let him, too, cultivate his pride; and he cannot do it more effectually, than by cherishing such feelings. These things, more than all the physical evils which can be endured, constitute the misery of the world; and even the physical suffering, in its greatest measure, is inflicted by man upon his fellow-man by the exercise of his pride. If, then, a man will not humble his pride, he can blame no one but himself, if, at last, it make him detested by his fellow-creatures: he must look forward to a life of wretchedness, a death of horror, and an eternity of despair.

The angry passions originate in pride, and their exercise is an appropriate exhibition of its nature. Their tendency is to revenge whatev-

er the pride can construe into an injury or an insult; and they drive the subject of them to the infliction of pain and suffering upon others, and sometimes to the commission of murder. And, whether they break out into open acts of violence, or expend themselves in furious looks and words, or whether they are confined by circumstances to the bosom that harbors them, they still, in every case, gnaw at the heart which gave them birth, feeding upon and growing by the life's blood of their parent. In the exercise of this, no more than in that of any other offspring of the proud heart, does the tempter fulfil his promise by granting pleasure as the recompense. He stirs up the evil passion, and then uses it to torment the very heart in which he has placed it, even when it is that of his own faithful servant; and he no doubt exults with tenfold satisfaction, when, by it, he can plant a thorn in the bosom of such as have thrown off his livery. By this, he has long spread unhappiness throughout the world,—causing the friend to lift his hand against his friend,—setting the son against his father—dividing the husband from the wife—and bringing wretchedness upon families, communities, and nations—even setting Christian at variance with his brother Christian—thus making those

unhappy in this world, whose condemnation he would gladly have secured in the next. Ah! how little worthy to be called disciples of the Prince of Peace do many Christians show themselves, who allow the adversary of their souls to stir them up one against another! How happy must the church be, when discord shall no longer be heard within her walls; and happy the world, when it shall be embraced within them. Will not all her children say, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity in thy palaces? For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee!"

As anger is an appropriate exhibition of pride, so is profanity a ready expression, both of pride and anger. The heart of man is so degenerate in its propensities, and so intricate in its mazes, that even after it has become regenerated, and in some measure sanctified, pride will still find a harbor there; and even where the most pains is taken to eradicate it, it may still be found lurking in some hidden corner, whence it may sometimes sally forth to annoy its possessor, if not, to bring reproach upon his religion. The angry passions of even the true Christian may not always, though they always should, be brought into complete subjection; and they can never break forth with

out bringing a scandal upon his profession. No professor, I conceive, can be a true Christian, who does not strive to overcome these corruptions of his nature: but such an innate disposition to evil, has the human heart, and so weak is man in himself, and even when in some degree renovated, he is so apt to trust in himself, that their evil dispositions are seldom, if ever, wholly subdued. But it is not so with the vice of profane swearing. A man's heart can be sanctified in no degree, whose character is deformed by it. No one would hesitate a moment in saying, that a man cannot be a Christian, whom he should hear taking his Makers' name in vain. All must allow that the profane swearer must be a gross hypocrite, if he makes a profession of religion. And what are the pleasures to be derived from this sin? Meagre, indeed, are they, and a man must appear very moderate in his expectations, who is willing to serve Satan for such small wages. But if the profits of this vice are small, so are not the losses which it brings, or the discomfort which follows its exercise. Pride, in its exercise, brings little but annoyance to its possessor; anger, as I have said before, gnaws upon the heart which harbors it; and this vice of profane swearing, while it serves to exhibit

either passion, adds to their intensity, and, of course, to the annoyance which they occasion. Add to this the fact, that it excites disgust in all good men, and even in all worldly men, whose opinions are worthy of regard; and it must appear, that even those who fear not God's wrath, which will surely be visited upon them for this sin hereafter, have little cause to congratulate themselves on the happiness they derive from it in this world. The swearer degrades himself without enjoying even the small portion of pleasure, which the exercise of some other vices gives in return for the evils which follow them.

If I was to go on, to prove that drunkenness, or intemperance of any kind, could confer but little comfort, I could only say what has often been said before, and what can need but little proof. I might go on with the catalogue of vices, and, perhaps, go on forever, without coming to an end; for innumerable are the evil propensities of the human heart, and the sins to which they give rise are more than the sands upon the sea-shore; they cannot be numbered. I have mentioned a few of the many, but the remarks, in general, will apply to the whole host of them. I have said as much as would probably be useful, perhaps so much, as to

prove abundantly tedious; but I have one more observation to make, and that is, that all sin, whatever form it may take, has its origin in the corruption of our nature; and the governing principle of that corrupt nature is selfishness.

From selfishness arises every evil passion, and the disposition to exercise sinfully those, which, but for the abuse, would be proper. Of course, every vicious propensity, and every act of sin, have their origin in selfishness; and this, like every other quality, whether good or bad, increases in power by the exercise of itself. Consequently, it is not only the source of every vice, but it is also the result. It causes, and is caused by, every act of sin. It is the beginning equally, and the end; and each sinful action is but a step in the progress from one degree of selfishness to another. The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, sins of the body, and sins of the spirit, minister to this evil disposition, and are ministered to in return. Man, if left to himself, will go on rapidly from one stage to another, so that when he is once well started, the suggestions of the evil one seem almost needless to increase his speed; and, at last, he arrives at that degree of selfishness, which is characterized by hardness of heart.

This state of hardness of heart is marked by a deadness of feeling, which it seems appropriately to express: the sensibilities may, or may not be destroyed, as regards our fellow-creatures; but towards God, they are annihilated. Human laws may be despised, or they may be punctiliously regarded, and the proprieties of life scrupulously attended to; and yet, the requirements of the Almighty may be neglected, and his commands set at defiance. The individual may even profess to worship God, and to wish to do his will; he may attend the services of the sanctuary, listen to the preaching of the gospel, pay liberally for the support of its ministry, perhaps give something towards sending it to heathen lands; he may tithe mint, annise, and cummin, and yet have his heart deliberately, determinately, and hopelessly set against God. His state is characterized by a conscience that will not reprove, as well as by a heart which cannot feel; and these very forms and duties of religion are probably the means he has used to bring the lethargy upon his conscience, from which nothing can arouse it. The state of such a man is more hopeless than that of the most vicious profligate. The last cannot but know himself to be a sinner; while the first, persuades himself that he is righteous,

whilst his heart is hardened towards his God. The one, though he feels his bondage, may feel that it is so hopeless, that he will make no effort to be free; but the other is a slave, he knows it not, and therefore can have no wish for freedom.

It is this disposition to deceive ourselves, as well as our increased inclination to vice, from living in the habits of sin, which should make us cautious how we allow the last to have dominion over us for a single hour. Every hour that we live in sin, and each succeeding day, makes the work of repentance more difficult and more bitter. The longer it is deferred, the nearer we approach to that state, in which we cannot repent. We all feel, we cannot help feeling, that it is a work which must be done at some time. I do not believe, that there was ever any person bred in a Christian land, who has not been sensible that if he did not repent he must perish; or, that there has scarcely been a heathen, however benighted, who did not instinctively feel it. Of course, no one will deliberately give himself up to perdition; but each one flatters himself, or, till his conscience was seared, he did flatter himself, that he would one day repent; and it is one of the prime devices of the evil one, to persuade men, that

there will be plenty of time when they have sinned a little more. A little more, and a little more, has sealed the fate of millions. Were it not for this delusion, multitudes whom we now see hugging their sins in security, and other multitudes who are satisfying themselves with a formal or a false religion, might have sought the way of life, and would now be rejoicing in the hope of eternal happiness;—and oh, the myriads now in despair, carried there by allowing their deceived hearts to listen to the father of lies, when he has whispered that there is plenty of life before them, and that, at any time, they can repent. Any time proved with them, as it most always does, to be no time; and, for listening to the suggestion, they are in —hell.

As men grow hardened, the preaching of the gospel becomes less and less effectual with them. The wrath of God, threatening condemnation to the wicked, they learn to disregard. The awful denunciations of his word, which could at one time awaken the voice of conscience, has become an unmeaning letter. Perhaps they still listen to the words, but they are sounds without import. The very fact that they have heard them so often, causes them to be the less regarded; they have become words

without meaning, a mere vibration in the air, which acts upon the ear without conveying any impression to the mind. The death in hell has become too familiar to produce any effect upon the imagination; though to those, who have any conception of the horror of that death, it would appear impossible, did not the result of daily observation prove it to be a fact.

But in this, the effect is the same as with every thing else of frequent recurrence. However the mind may be affected at first, the daily repetition of any subject causes it, at last, to be passed over without exciting attention. When a traveller, for the first time, observes an eruption of a volcano, he sees the flames ascend with awe, he hears with trembling the unearthly thunder, and, finding the ground quake beneath him, he feels as if it was about to open and swallow him up. But in a little time he grows familiar with the sights and sounds, and treads with confidence the trembling earth. And the inhabitants who dwell upon the sides of the mountain, and with whom the phenomena are of daily recurrence, observe them with as little emotion as would be excited by a thunder-gust in other countries, unless a more violent eruption than usual threatens them with immediate destruction. Then, indeed, all

is consternation and terror; but when the crisis has passed, they settle down again into their former apathy.

Every unrepentant sinner dwells on the side of a volcano; it trembles beneath him, ready to open and receive his soul into its mass of liquid fire. But they are, in general, like the inhabitants of Vesuvius, living at ease, regardless of the molteu lake from which a thin crust of earth alone divides them. Like them, they plant and sow, they buy and sell, they build houses, and make preparation for a long life of ease and pleasure, without thinking of the dreadful abyss into which, each moment, they are liable to be plunged. But when death appears to approach, then, like the affrighted peasants on the mountain side, they are seized with horror, and, like them, too, when the immediate danger has passed, they again sink into their former apathy.

In nothing is this disposition of the mind, to look with indifference upon those events to which it is accustomed, more marked than it is in the feelings displayed by mankind in seeing the death of others. Death, the thing of which mankind most stand in dread, is often used in scripture as a figure to express the eternal condemnation of the wicked, which stamps its

most appalling features upon the temporal death, making it, indeed, a just object of terror to the wicked. The phenomena of the natural death, and the threatenings of eternal death, become, at last, from frequent repetition, to be equally disregarded. Our instinctive dread of the king of terrors is so great, that a person, unaccustomed to the sight, cannot see the approach of the grim tyrant to any of his fellow-creatures without trembling; he cannot even see a dog die, without a feeling of horror. And yet the same person, by the force of habit, may learn to look upon the departure of his fellow-men into eternity with perfect indifference. The death of the sinner is often attended with circumstances of horror; and yet his fellow-sinners, accustomed to such sights, can look upon it with entire apathy of feeling.

Perhaps the reader may remember some account I have given, in a former chapter, of the death of a profane swearer. His was a horrible death, too horrible to think of without shuddering. He was, at the time, surrounded by about fifty sea-faring men, inmates of the same hospital, and all of them strangers to him. When his breath had departed as he uttered his last oath, one of the standers by stepped up to the bed, and closed his eyes, and laid his

limbs straight. They watched him for a moment, as the paleness of death came down by degrees over his features; and then they left him, and in ten minutes their laugh was as loud, and their jokes as merry as if nothing had happened. In less than half an hour, the dead body was carried out, and it is probable the poor fellow was not again mentioned, nor thought of. The reader will think that it is impossible that he could ever look upon death with so much indifference, and that those men must have been very wicked and very hard-hearted who did so. Hard-hearted, and very wicked, no doubt, many of them were; but no more wicked in viewing death with indifference, than you are, if, with like insensibility, you look upon sin. Perhaps there was not a man there, who would not readily have risked his life to save that of his fellow. What would you do, reader, to save a fellow-being from the death eternal?

The man of whom I have spoken, was a stranger to those around him, and they were strangers to him; but I have known instances, where death has been as little noticed, and the dead man as speedily forgotten, to all appearance, when he had been a favorite companion and an acquaintance of years standing! One

case I will mention, which occurred in the river Plata, many years since. I was then passenger, homeward bound, in a ship, on board of which I had entered a few days before, at Ensenado, and was entirely unacquainted with almost every one on board. We sailed in the morning with a fine breeze, all in fine spirits at the prospect of going home. In the afternoon we had nearly gained the mouth of the noble river, which was so wide, that we could see the banks on neither side, and, but for the color of the water, might have supposed ourselves in the main ocean. As we neared the mouth of the river, the captain called us to see the wreck of a vessel, which lay stranded upon a sand-bank. He told us her name, and I found she was an old acquaintance. I had seen her some years before, lying at Whampoa: we sailed in company with her, and I saw her, proudly outstrip a whole fleet in the race, and when the sun went down, there was nothing to be seen above the horizon but the tops of her masts. The next morning these had disappeared, and we supposed she would be home long before us; but in the Straits of Sunda we again came upon her in a thunder-storm, saw her dismasted by the lightning, and then bear away for Batavia to repair the damage. I saw no more of

her, till I now saw her naked bones abandoned to be the sport of the waves, a sample of the end of all man's labors. As we were looking at the wreck, and conversing about it, we were startled by the cry, "A man is overboard!" We ran to leeward, and could see nothing but a tarpaulin hat floating astern.

The man had fallen from the fore-yard, and had sunk deep in the water, and as the ship was going at the rate of eight knots, he was far in her wake before he rose to the surface. The helm, at the first cry, had been put down, and the yards braced. The ship rounded to; but as we were going before the wind with all studding-sails out, it was some time before her headway could be checked. Meantime, a boat had been lowered, manned and put off to the rescue. But which way to look for the man, was the next question. We had seen him go astern, and we very naturally looked astern to find him; but the ship had come round making a great circuit in the water, and her stern now pointed in a very different direction from what it had before. In their eagerness to stop the progress of the ship, and clear away the boat, every one had forgotten to keep an eye upon the man; and where he was now, no one could guess. To look for so small a thing as a hat

or a man's head, in an expanse of water bounded only by the horizon, seemed almost hopeless; nevertheless, the boat was pulled about for nearly an hour, in the hope that he might be found, and long after there was any chance of his being alive, the sailors seemed loath to give him up, and still rowed around in every direction. All saw at last that it was in vain, and they came on board.

They looked serious and solemn. No one spoke above a whisper, and each seemed as if he had lost a brother. At last the captain gave orders to make sail, and before things were again restored to their former condition, the men were swearing, joking, and laughing, as if no accident had occurred. The man was one of the best seamen on board, and a favorite with his shipmates; and yet seemed as completely forgotten before the small remnant of the day had passed, as though he had never been in existence. All had been in earnest while the excitement of action kept up their interest; but when that subsided, their lost companion was to them as if he had never been.

Undoubtedly, it exhibits greater hardness of heart, to show lightness and profaneness directly after the death of an acquaintance and a friend, than in doing so after that of a stranger.

And does not an equal degree of insensibility manifest itself in those, who can calmly look, not only at acquaintances and friends, but at their nearest relatives, going on in that broad road which they know will lead them to destruction, and yet make not so much as a single effort to save them? Must not the hearts of those be the seat of selfishness, who can rest satisfied in the expectation that their own salvation is secure, while so many of their fellow-creatures, and even of their own friends and kindred, are going down to perdition? Can any one look upon a parent, a brother, or a sister, or perhaps upon a child, his own flesh and blood, or upon a wife, his partner in weal and woe, and, knowing that they are yet unrepentant, can he wrap himself up in his own security without striving to snatch them from perdition, and yet call himself a Christian? Can a man look upon the face of any poor sinner, even a stranger he meets in the street, and, knowing that he is preparing to be food for the never-dying flames of the bottomless pit, can he see him without emotion, and without his heart yearning to do something to save him, and yet call himself a disciple of Jesus? Or, can any man remember that there are millions in his own country, and hundreds of millions in

heathen lands, who are going on to augment the multitudes that, even now, crowd the bottomless pit, and yet make no effort to send to them the means of salvation, already provided by our blessed Lord; and can such a man call himself a follower of that compassionate Savior?

Surely such an one deceives himself—he cannot be a Christian. His spirit is a spirit of selfishness, directly opposed to the Christian spirit. If we are Christians, we must be like-minded with Christ; we must be influenced by the same motives, be guided by the same principles, strive for the same end. He has left us an example, that we may walk in his steps; and if we walk not in the same path as regards compassion for our fellow-creatures, we can be none of his. Selfishness was no principle of action with him; love of himself was never a motive; self-exaltation, or self-indulgence, was never his purposed end. And, if we are his, we must strive to be like him; we must feel compassion for a fallen world; our hearts must yearn over the poor sinners around us; we must desire the glory of God in their salvation. What we desire, we must endeavor, with his blessing, to effect, so far at least as we can do it in providing the means. If we will not do it,

how can we resist the conviction that selfishness is still our ruling principle, and, of course, that our hearts are still unrenewed. If, notwithstanding this, we will still believe that we have been converted, there is much reason to fear that our hearts have become hardened, and that we have been given over to believe a lie. Does it not, then, behoove all of us to examine ourselves by this rule, lest, having trusted in a false hope, we should come short of salvation at last?

And what must be said of those, who can hear a parent, or any dear friend, plead with them, day after day, and still refuse to listen,—who can see the anguish of their spirit, when they think that the objects of their love are on the way to perdition,—and still remain unmoved—still neglect that way of salvation which can alone preserve them—and thus persist in causing pain to the affectionate hearts that have already endured so much for them? If this should fall in the way of any who have hitherto allowed a kind relative or friend to strive with them in vain, let me now urge them to consider whether they mean always to do so! Are they willing to be given over to hardness of heart? Who will say so, knowing it is equivalent to taking perdition for their por

And yet they are taking the readiest measures to make their hearts hard. Resisting the tears of their friends, they are resisting God; and will it be strange, if he should allow them to become wholly obdurate? I cannot believe there is any one, who would deliberately take a residence in hell as his eternal inheritance. Why, then, will any be still preparing themselves for it, by keeping in exercise such obduracy of feeling? Those who habitually act with cruelty to their friends and ingratitude to God, can be fit for no other residence in the eternal world: there, we know, there are but two states, heaven and hell; and heaven would cease to be heaven, if such were admitted there.

It is not generally considered how utterly selfish this state of impenitence is. The sinner will sometimes say to those friends who annoy him with their remonstrances,—"Why should you trouble yourself so much about me? if I am not saved, it will be me, and not you, who will suffer; and if I am willing to take the risk, you need not inconvenience yourself on my account." And what he says, perhaps in words, of a friend's call to him to repent, he says by his actions of God's offers of mercy. But does he mean what his words and deeds imply? Nine times out of ten he would look aghast, if

taken at his word. Those are not the only hypocrites who assume the garb of religion: there is many a sinner, who pretends an indifference to the consequences of sin, which he does not feel, and who would be filled with consternation if he was convinced there remained for him no way of escape. If he thought that his friends would never again attempt to draw his attention to religion, he would be more likely to listen to the present call: if he thought that God was making his last offer of mercy, he would eagerly catch at it. But he feels confident that his religious friends cannot but strive to persuade him, and he trusts that the door of mercy will continue open. But Christian friends may get weary, and feeling that they are but casting pearls before swine, may, at last, cease their efforts, and, though with heavy hearts, feel obliged to leave those they love to follow their own way; and though the doors of mercy may now be open, it does not follow that they will always be so; those who have resisted many calls, will be likely to become so hardened as to lose all desire to enter. Oh, what littleness of soul is in man, to think of being saved at last by the mercy of that God, whose spirit he persists in grieving by his sins!

How wretchedly vile and despicable are those who know the way of salvation, and yet will not now repent, because they believe that they can do it at some future time, when they have enjoyed their sins a little longer. They know that eternal torments are the just punishment of those sins, and that the only means of escape are through the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. They know that it was sin which gave an awful intensity to every pain which he endured; and, knowing it, they will still go on in it, though they hope to be saved from the punishment at last, in consequence of what he has suffered. In preparing for them the way of escape, they are aware that he was crowned with thorns, that he was scourged as a malefactor, that he was nailed to the cross; thus dying the most painful death which the cruelty of man, by the suggestions of the devil, has been enabled to invent. And, more than all, in the hour of his greatest agony, they know, that he was left alone, desolate by the withdrawal of his Father's presence. And, knowing this, and expecting to be saved at last by these sufferings, they think to go on in sin a little longer, and thus add a few more thorns to that crown, cause the lashes to cut a little deeper, give poignancy to the thrust of the ago-

nizing nails, and add a shade of darkness to the dreadful hour of desolation. Is it strange that the heart of one who can do so, should become hardened? Is it not rather strange, that God should ever give such an one another chance? He is truly a God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in goodness and in truth. He does give such a chance to repent; but who would be so unwise and so ignoble as to try the patience of such a God any longer?

And now, reader, if you hope that you are a Christian, let me ask you if there are not some whom you love, but whom you cannot hope are in the way of salvation. Remember, that for them Christ died, as well as for you, and do not neglect to urge them to come to the same Savior. Remember how much he has done for you, and how little you can do in return; strive to do that little, by endeavoring to draw those you love to him. He will rejoice at the return of even one of his lost lambs; and you will rejoice forever, if you should be made the means of bringing to him any who are dear to you. Oh, how happy will you be, to see their faces smiling around you in heaven. And not your friends only, but there is none so distant, not even the most polluted of the heathen, but may

thus be made to you a crown of joy, and an object of rejoicing to your kind Savior and all the heavenly host.

And, reader, if you have not yet taken this Savior for your Savior, take him, take him now, and give to his heart the delight which he endured so much to win. Wait not to plant another thorn in his brow, but come to him even now, while the call is ringing in your ears; come in humble prayer, and he will never cast you out,—it will be his greatest joy to receive you.

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